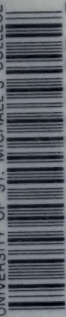


UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



3 J76J 01935607 0

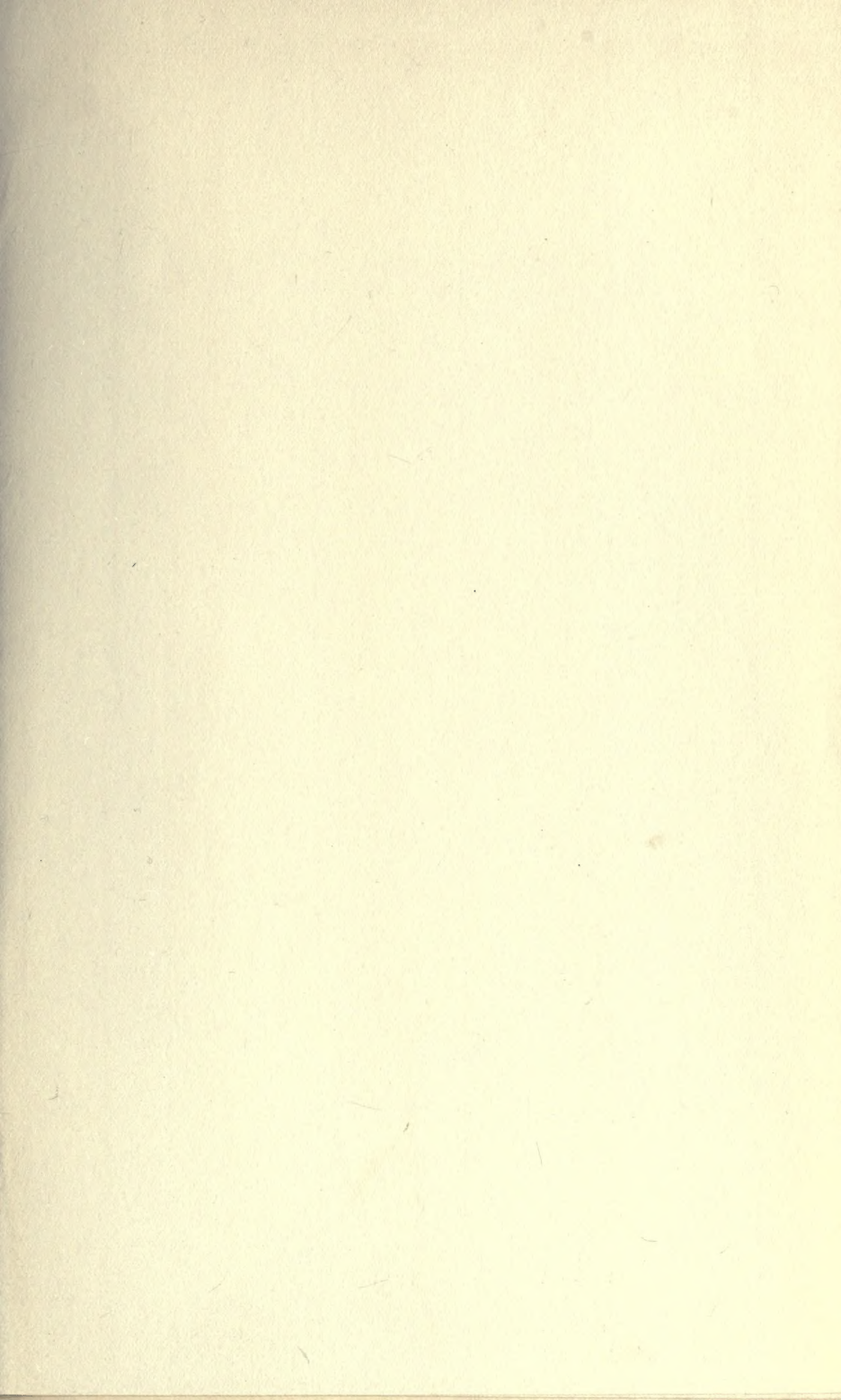















Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2008 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation





*THE NOVELISTS' LIBRARY*

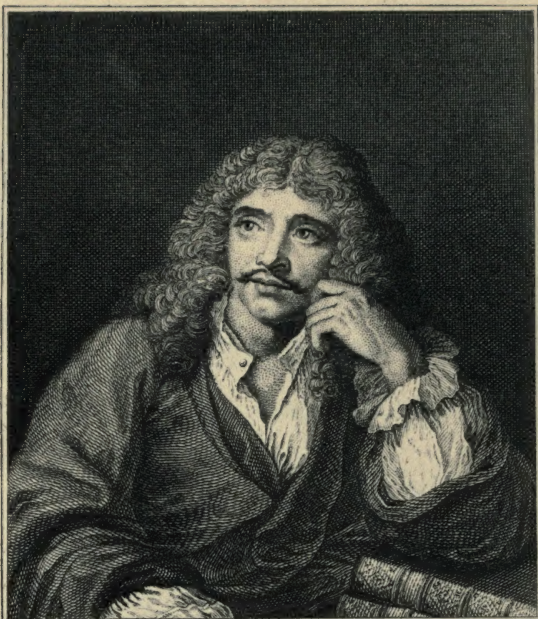
*Edition de Luxe*

*Limited to Five Hundred Numbered Sets*

*This Set is Number*.....*123*







MOLIERE.



# THE PLAYS OF MOLIÈRE

Translated by  
ANTHONY BONVILLE & COMPANY

THE MERE  
WOMAN  
THE FURBER

— 1600 —

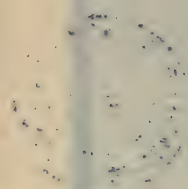


*Molière, from the portrait by Coyfel*

VOL. IV., Frontispiece



NEW YORK  
CHAS. SCRIBNER'S SONS  
1890





# THE PLAYS OF MOLIÈRE

TRANSLATED BY  
KATHARINE PRESCOTT WORMELEY

*THE MISER*  
*DON JUAN*  
*THE BORES*

VOLUME FOUR



BOSTON  
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY  
1909

*Copyright, 1895,*  
BY ROBERTS BROTHERS

---

*All Rights Reserved.*





## CONTENTS

---

|  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| INTRODUCTORY NOTES . . . . .             | 7    |
| L'AVARE . . . . .                        | 17   |
| (The Miser)                              |      |
| DON JUAN, OR LE FESTIN DE PIERRE . . . . | 183  |
| LES FÂCHEUX . . . . .                    | 313  |
| (Bores)                                  |      |







## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

|   | PAGE                |
|---|---------------------|
| MOLIÈRE, AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY COYPEL                       | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| "BROTHER! STOP! I OWE MY LIFE TO THIS MAN"                  |                     |
| <i>Vignette on Title</i>                                    |                     |
| Don Juan, Act III., Sc. v.                                  |                     |
| "A PLAGUE UPON ALL MISERS AND THEIR AVARICE!"               | 34                  |
| L'Avare, Act I., Sc. iii.                                   |                     |
| "WHAT FINE REASONS CAN YOU GIVE, PRAY, YOU INFAMOUS THIEF?" |                     |
| L'Avare, Act V., Sc. iii.                                   | 160                 |
| "MONSIEUR, WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE WITH CHARLOTTE?"        |                     |
| Don Juan, Act II., Sc. v.                                   | 230                 |
| "I SAY THE JEALOUS MAN LOVES MOST, THE OTHER BEST"          |                     |
| Les Facheux, Act II., Sc. iv.                               | 347                 |







## INTRODUCTORY NOTES

---

L'AVARE was played for the first time on the 9th of September, 1668.

Avarice, in the sense of hoarding, as distinguished from excessive desire for gain, is a vice which seems scarcely to exist in the present day. Therefore those who judge of what they read by its visible connection with the things they know, and who require it to harmonize with their own experience, will find less to interest them in this play than in others. But in Louis XIV.'s time this vice was very prevalent. The nobles alone had the privilege of ruining themselves, — either in serving the State, or by indulging in a luxury beyond their means. The commoners and the provincial burghers, cut off from social display, consoled themselves with growing rich by preying upon State and nobles, and then, in order to hide their gains, they hoarded them.

From those days (and perhaps from earlier times) France has been the home of thrift, — a virtue which, while making it the richest nation on the globe, has also made it pre-eminent for the corresponding vice. French avarice, as shown in the pages of French fiction, seems to go deeper into the nature of man than the avarice of other lands. Harpagon is not only its type, but his very name has passed into the French and English languages as a synonymous term for "miser."

"Don Juan," called also "Le Festin de pierre," the first romantic drama presented on the French stage, made its appearance in February, 1665. Monsieur Aimé-Martin gives the following account of the origin of the story, which he takes from an anonymous Spanish pamphlet.

The Chronicles of Seville speak of Don Juan Tenorio, one of the "Twenty-four," a debauched and wicked man, sheltering his immorality under the protection of his rank. He abducted the daughter of the Commander de Ulloa, adding homicide to the crime, for the old father, endeavoring to arrest the ravisher, fell dead from a sword-thrust. His family, filled with despair,



could obtain no justice, but were forced to suffer, in silence, their shame and grief. Don Juan, emboldened by this triumph, became a terror to Seville, no one daring to oppose his will.

The Commander was buried in the church of the Franciscan monks, where the Ulloa family had a chapel. These monks, in the depths of their cloister, determined to arrest Don Juan in his criminal career, and to do what the impotence of the laws or the cowardice of magistrates had failed in doing. Don Juan was condemned by them to signal punishment. He received a letter from an unknown woman, who described herself as young and beautiful, giving him a rendezvous in the church of the Franciscans at a late hour of the night. Don Juan went, but he never returned ; nor was his body ever found. The next day the monks spread a rumor that the knight had come to the church to insult the Commander in his own chapel ; the man of marble had arisen, the earth had opened and the impious knight had fallen, living, into hell. What Spaniard would dare to doubt a miracle affirmed by monks ? It was therefore received as true, and human justice made no inquiry into the case.

At this time there lived in the convent a

monk, called Fra Gabriel Tellez, theologian, poet, and preacher. This monk, having been appointed commander of his order, thought best to adopt a fictitious name for his dramatic writings. He chose that of Tirso de Molina, and it was under that name that he took for the subject of a play Don Juan Tenorio.

The Spanish drama is divided into three days. The scene opens at Naples and closes at Seville. The poet-monk passes before our eyes a crowd of personages of all conditions. So, for that matter, does Molière until the closing scene, which takes place in a church and terminates, according to Tirso de Molina, in the repentance of Don Juan, who asks in vain for a confessor to give him absolution. "It is too late," replies the statue. "This is the justice of God; as thy deeds so shall thy payment be;" whereupon Don Juan is swallowed up, together with the tomb and the statue.

The drama of the monk Tellez was of a nature to produce a deep impression on the imagination of so ardent and religious a people as the Spanish. Its success was altogether popular. Don Juan became the type of an impious, debauched nobleman, a bully, a faithless husband, a heartless lover. After enjoying a

great vogue in Spain it was taken into Italy where it obtained a like success. Its reputation then reached France, and the French comedians, says La Harpe, were so determined to obtain a Don Juan of their own that Molière wrote the play to satisfy them.

Don Juan himself is, properly speaking, a literary and imaginative type. As such, he has become the hero of a cycle, and a crowd of compositions, of greater or less importance, have grouped themselves round Molière's comedy. Drama, poesy, music, romantic fiction have imitated, worked up, and made over, in a hundred diverse ways, the murderer of the Commander, the insolvent debtor of Monsieur Dimanche, the heartless seducer of Charlotte and Mathurine, the atheist who braved Heaven. Thomas Corneille thought it not derogatory to his fame to turn Molière's prose into verse; Mozart, inspired by Don Juan, produced his masterpiece; Byron transformed him into the hero of his dazzling poem; Richardson transported him, under the name of Lovelace, to the pages of "*Clarissa Harlowe*;" and, in our own day, Prosper Mérimée has related (in his "*Souls in Purgatory*") the stormy penitence and the last expiations of his career.



In the drama of the Spanish monk the dominant note is faith, imagination, and religious honor. We are in the middle ages; a monk is speaking to believers; and the marvellous (the essence of all legends) finds its natural place here, — for the drama is, in point of fact, a legend. With Molière, on the contrary, the legend disappears and gives place to the comedy. The Spanish Don Juan in the midst of his debauches is really no more than an impious swaggerer, who betrays his terror and remorse by imploring the spectre of the commander. The French Don Juan, on the contrary, is an atheist who laughs at heaven and hell, and is only sincere in one thing, — unbelief. Molière, says Monsieur Genin, remade the character. It is he who created the Don Juan adopted by the arts, — the universal sceptic, the scoffer at all things, the unbeliever in love as well as in religion and science, the type of intellectual and elegant vice; who nevertheless holds our interest and elevates himself somewhat by the force of his pride and energy, like Milton's Satan.

Unfortunately — continues Monsieur Genin — the philosophy of this picture of society is marred at the close by the absurdities of the

final phantasmagoria. In the monk's drama all was poetic and impossible from beginning to end; actions and personages, all was unity. The poet asked nothing of the spectator but faith, blind faith. Molière asks of his both faith and reason. He passes abruptly from a real and prosaic world to a domain of imagination and poetry. Here is the radical vice of the play. Molière himself is conscious of it, and hastens to bring the drama to a close when, after four acts of high moral and philosophic tendency he is forced to make use of a finale which is only in keeping with a monk's idea.

This, however, which was inevitable in adopting the tale, does not prevent "Don Juan" from being one of Molière's strongest conceptions, and one which does the highest honor to his genius.

"Les Fâcheux," a play made up of detached scenes, without plan or plot, was the first attempt ever made on the French stage at what have since been called "*pièces à tiroir*," — comedies of episode. It was also a first attempt at the comedy-ballet. Molière himself tells us that it was imagined, written, studied, and acted in fifteen days, for the occasion of a fête

given at Vaux, by Fouquet, on the 17th ' of August, 1661.

Monsieur Aimé-Martin relates, in his edition, a curious anecdote which he found in a memoir of the 17th century; it explains how and why Molière wrote "Les Fâcheux."

After the appearance of "Les Précieuses," in which the people about the court had been so well represented and laughed at, these very people gave Molière, of their own accord and with much eagerness, notes and anecdotes of what happened in society, with sketches of their own defects and those of their best friends; believing, apparently, that it gave them a sort of fame to be recognized in his work and to have it said that he drew his portraits from them. For, strange to say, people of fashion have defects of which they are proud, and they would not, for the world, have it thought that they did not have them. Molière received innumerable memoranda, with requests that he would use them; and I once saw him much harassed, one evening after the play, looking about him for tablets on which to write down the things that certain persons of condition, who surrounded him, were anxious to tell him. . . .

The number of these notes thus furnished



became so considerable that he bethought himself, in order to satisfy these people of quality and ridicule them as they wished, to write a play in which he could put a quantity of their portraits. Thus he wrote "*Les Fâcheux*," the subject of which is as malicious as could well be imagined. It is really not a stage play at all, but a bundle of detached portraits, drawn from the notes above-mentioned, and put together so naturally, so well touched in, and so carefully finished off that it deserves its fame. A fact which shows that the quality were not only very pleased to be thus laughed at, but that they wished it to be known they were the persons intended, is that they came to the theatre whenever the piece was played and did the same actions and gestures before the stage that the comedians were doing on it in imitation of them.

It was on the production of this piece that Louis XIV. showed his special favor and protection to Molière by putting him in charge of the amusements of the court.



L'AVARE

(THE MISER)



Comedy

IN FIVE ACTS



## PERSONAGES

---

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| HARPAGON . . . . .      | <i>Father of Cléante and Élise;<br/>in love with Mariane.</i> |
| CLÉANTE . . . . .       | <i>Son of Harpagon, in love with<br/>Mariane.</i>             |
| ÉLISE . . . . .         | <i>Daughter of Harpagon, beloved<br/>by Valère.</i>           |
| VALÈRE . . . . .        | <i>Son of Anselme, Lover of Élise.</i>                        |
| MARIANE . . . . .       | <i>In love with Cléante, beloved by<br/>Harpagon.</i>         |
| ANSELME . . . . .       | <i>Father of Valère and Mariane.</i>                          |
| FROSINE . . . . .       | <i>An intriguing Woman.</i>                                   |
| MAÎTRE SIMON . . . .    | <i>A Broker.</i>  |
| MAÎTRE JACQUES . . .    | <i>Cook and Coachman to Harpagon.</i>                         |
| LA FLÈCHE . . . . .     | <i>Valet to Cléante.</i>                                      |
| DAME CLAUDE . . . .     | <i>Servant-woman to Harpagon.</i>                             |
| BRINDAVOINE } . . .     | <i>Lacqueys to Harpagon.</i>                                  |
| LA MERLUCHE }           |   |
| A COMMISSARY OF POLICE. |   |

The scene is in Paris, at the house of Harpagon.



# L'AVARE

Act First



SCENE FIRST

VALÈRE, ÉLISE

VALÈRE.

HEY! how is this, my charming Élise? Why so melancholy after the kind assurances you have given me of your love? Amid my joy I hear you sigh, alas! Is it that you regret — tell me — regret to have made me happy? Do you repent of this engagement into which my ardor may have hurried you?

ÉLISE.

No, Valère; I never can regret aught that I do for you, — too sweet a power constrains me; nor have I strength even to wish that it were otherwise. But, to speak truly, 't is the joy

itself that makes me anxious. I fear to love too much, — more than I should.

VALÈRE.

Élise! what can you fear from the affection that you feel for me?

ÉLISE.

Alas! a hundred things, — my father's anger; the reproaches of my family; the censure of the world; but most of all, Valère, the changing of your heart; that cruel coldness with which your sex so oft repays the too great ardor of an innocent love.

VALÈRE.

Ah! do me not the wrong of judging me by others. Suspect me of all else, Élise, except the crime of failing in what I owe to you. I love you far too much for that; my love is such that it will last as long as life itself may last in me.

ÉLISE.

Ah! Valère, all men say the same; they are all alike in words; 't is only by their deeds we find them different.



VALÈRE.

Since deeds alone show what we are, wait, wait, at least, to judge my heart by them; impute to it no crimes through the mistaken fears of false foreboding. Do not torture me, I implore you, by the painful blows of such unwarranted suspicion, but grant me time to show you by a thousand and ten thousand proofs the truth and honor of my passion.

ÉLISE.

Alas! how easily we let the persons whom we love persuade us. Yes, Valère, I hold your heart incapable of wronging me. I know you love me with true love, forever faithful. I will not doubt you; I retract all fears, except the dread lest others blame me.

VALÈRE.

But why that dread?

ÉLISE.

I should have nought to fear if all the world saw you with eyes like mine; for I see in your very person a warrant for the things I do for you. My heart has your deserts for its defence,

supported by a gratitude which Heaven itself has bidden me feel for you. Hourly do I recall that dreadful danger in which our knowledge of each other first began; that surpassing generosity which made you risk your life to rescue mine from the fury of the waves; those cares, so tender! after you had dragged me from the water; and then, the unfailing homage of an ardent love which neither time nor difficulties have repelled; a love which binds you to this place, neglecting parents and your country, disguising your true station, and becoming, for my sake,—that you may see me daily,—a steward in my father's household. All this has wonderful effect indeed upon my heart. It is enough to justify, in my eyes, the engagement I have made with you; but not enough, perhaps, in those of others, and thus I fear they will not share my feelings.

## VALÈRE.

In spite of all you say of me, 't is for my love alone that I deserve you. As for the scruples that you have about your family, your father takes, alas! great pains to justify your action to the world. His monstrous avarice, and the stern manner with which he treats his children

would authorize far stranger acts than yours. Forgive me, dear Élise, for speaking plainly; you know that on this point no good is ever said. But if, as I now hope, I may regain my parents, there will be no hindrance, I am sure, to winning their consent to all our wishes. I am expecting tidings with impatience, and if they are delayed I shall go myself to seek them.

ÉLISE.

Ah! Valère, no; I entreat you not to leave me; think only of how to win my father's good opinion.

VALÈRE.

You see the pains I take to do so, and the adroit compliances I used to be admitted to his service; you know the mask of sympathy and kindred feeling behind which I disguise myself to please him, and the sort of personage which I daily play to obtain his liking. I'm making admirable progress; I'm learning that in order to win men there is no better way than to assume before their eyes their inclinations, give in to all their maxims, flatter their defects, and applaud whate'er they do. There is no fear of overdoing such compliance; the way we fool them may be made as visible as you please;

the cleverest are mere dupes upon the side of flattery, and there is nothing so preposterous, so absurd, that they cannot be made to swallow it if we season it with praise. Sincerity suffers somewhat, it is true; but if we have need of men we must, alas! adapt our conduct to their foibles; and since we cannot win them in any other way 't is not the fault of him who flatters, but of those who will be flattered.

ÉLISE.

But why not try to gain my brother's help in case the servant takes it into her head to reveal our secret?

VALÈRE.

The two cannot be managed by one hand; the minds of father and of son are so opposed that the confidence of both would be most difficult to retain. But you, on your side, might act upon your brother and use the tie between you to bind him to our interests. Here he comes now, and I retire. Take the present opportunity of speaking to him; reveal as much as you think proper of our love.

ÉLISE.

I do not know if I have strength to make that revelation.



## SCENE SECOND

CLÉANTE, ÉLISE

CLÉANTE.

I am so glad to find you here alone, Élise; I long to talk to you, that I may tell you of a secret.

ÉLISE.

And I am ready to listen, brother. What have you to tell me?

CLÉANTE.

Many things; all in a single word, — I am in love!

ÉLISE.

You, in love?

CLÉANTE.

Yes, in love. But stay, before we go on, let me say I know I am dependent on a father; I know the name of son subjects me to his will; that sons must not engage their love without the consent of those who gave them birth; that Heaven has set our parents masters over us, and enjoins us not to dispose of our affections except as they may please; that parents, being unbiased by foolish ardor, are much less liable to be

misled than we, and know far better what is good for us; I know that we should sooner trust the enlightenment of their prudence than the blindness of our passion, and that the vehemence of youth oft leads us to the brink of fatal precipices. I tell you, sister, that I know all this, in order that you may spare yourself the trouble of saying it to me. My love will listen to nothing; and I request you to make me no remonstrances.

ÉLISE.

Have you engaged yourself to her you love?

CLÉANTE.

No, but I am resolved to do so; and I conjure you, once more, urge no reasons in order to dissuade me.

ÉLISE.

Am I so perverse a person, brother?

CLÉANTE.

No, sister; but you are not in love; you are ignorant of the soft violence of a tender passion within the heart; I fear your wisdom.

ÉLISE.

Alas! say nothing of my wisdom, brother. Who does not lack it, once in their lives at

least? And if I bared my heart before you perhaps I might seem, even to your eyes, less prudent than yourself.

CLÉANTE.

Ah! would to Heaven that your soul, like mine —

ÉLISE.

Let us talk first of your affairs, and tell me who it is you love.

CLÉANTE.

A young girl who has lately come to live in this quarter of the town; one who seems made to inspire love in all who see her. Nature, sister, never formed any one more lovable; I felt transported from the moment I first saw her. Her name is Mariane; she is under the guidance of a worthy mother, who is almost always ill, and for whom this loving girl shows feelings of affection which are unimaginable. She waits upon her, pities her, comforts her, with a tenderness which would touch you to the soul. She has a most charming air and manner in all she does; a thousand graces shine in every action, a sweetness full of charm, a most engaging kindness, an adorable modesty,

a — Ah! sister, how I wish that you could see her!

ÉLISE.

I do see much of her in what you say; to understand her well, it is enough for me to know you love her.

CLÉANTE.

I have discovered privately that they are not well off; in fact, even their careful management can hardly make the little that they have meet all their wants. Fancy, sister, what joy 't would be to lift the one I love to better fortune, — to give her now, by stealth, a little help toward the few necessities of her modest family; and then conceive how hateful 't is to me to feel that through my father's avarice I am powerless to taste that joy, or show to this dear girl a single token of my love.

ÉLISE.

Yes, I can well conceive that grief.

CLÉANTE.

Ah! sister, it is greater than you can conceive. Was ever anything so cruel as the rigorous parsimony exercised upon us, the un-



heard-of indigence in which we are made to languish? What good will it be to inherit property if it comes to us at an age when we can't enjoy it, and if, moreover, in order to maintain myself, I am forced to run in debt on every side? I am reduced, like you, to ask the help of shopkeepers merely for decent clothing. I want you to help me sound my father and see how he will take the feelings I now have. If I should find him obstinate, I am resolved to go elsewhere with this dear girl and seek what fortune Heaven may offer us. I am trying now, in all directions, to borrow money for this purpose; and if your matters, sister, are like mine, and our father should insist on thwarting our desires, let us both leave him; let us free ourselves from a tyranny under which his intolerable avarice too long has held us.

ÉLISE.

'Tis true that every day he gives us greater reason to regret our mother's death, and —

CLÉANTE.

I hear his voice; come aside with me to finish what we are saying; after which we will join forces to face the harshness of his temper.

## SCENE THIRD

HARPAGON, LA FLÈCHE

HARPAGON.

Out of this house at once! make me no answer. Come, begone! past-master of thievery! gallows-bird! —

LA FLÈCHE, *aside*.

Was ever any one as malignant as this cursèd old fellow? I believe, may I be thrashed for it! that the devil is in him.

HARPAGON.

What are you muttering there between your teeth?

LA FLÈCHE.

Why do you turn me out?

HARPAGON.

A pretty thing for you, you scoundrel! to ask why. Begone! and quickly too, or I'll knock you down.

LA FLÈCHE.

What have I done to you?

HARPAGON.

You have done that which makes me drive you out.

LA FLÈCHE.

My master, your son has ordered me to wait for him.

HARPAGON.

Then wait outside, and don't stand here, bolt upright like a sentry, in my house, observing all that happens, and seeking to get your profit out of it. I do not choose to have a spy on my affairs incessantly about me, — a traitor whose cursed eyes beset my actions, covet my possessions, and pry into every corner of this house to find a way to rob me.

LA FLÈCHE.

How the devil should anybody rob you? Are you a robable man, — you who lock up everything and stand guard over it night and day?

HARPAGON.

I choose to lock up what I please, and to stand guard as I think best. I want no spies to watch for what I do. (*Aside*) I tremble lest he suspect about my gold. (*Aloud*) You're just the sort of a man to spread a rumor that I keep money hidden in my house.

LA FLÈCHE.

Oh! you have money hidden, have you?

HARPAGON.

No, you rascal, I never said so. (*Aside*)  
I'm furious. (*Aloud*) I asked you whether  
you did not, maliciously, spread a rumor that  
I had it.

LA FLÈCHE.

Hey! what signifies it to any one whether you  
have money or not, since 'tis all the same to us?

HARPAGON, *lifting his hand to strike La*  
*Flèche.*

Do you dare to argue? I'll knock your argu-  
ments about your ears. Out of this house, I  
say!

LA FLÈCHE.

Well, well, I'm going.

HARPAGON.

Wait! do you carry nothing off?

LA FLÈCHE.

What should I carry off?



HARPAGON.

Here! come here, and let me see. Show me your hands.

LA FLÈCHE.

There they are.

HARPAGON.

The others.

LA FLÈCHE.

Others?

HARPAGON.

Yes.

LA FLÈCHE.

There!

HARPAGON, *feeling La Flèche's breeches.*

These big trunk-hose of yours are made to be the receivers of stolen goods. I hope some scoundrel will yet be hanged because of them.

LA FLÈCHE, *aside.*

Ah! how a man like this deserves the thing he fears! What joy I'd take in robbing him!

HARPAGON.

Ho!

LA FLÈCHE.

How?

HARPAGON.

What's that you say of robbing?

LA FLÈCHE.

I said you had searched me over finely to see if I had robbed you.

HARPAGON.

That 's what I mean to do. (*Feels in all La Flèche's pockets.*)

LA FLÈCHE, *aside*.

A plague upon all misers and their avarice!

HARPAGON.

What are you saying?

LA FLÈCHE.

What am I saying?

HARPAGON.

What did you say of avarice and misers?

LA FLÈCHE.

I said a plague upon all avarice and misers.

HARPAGON.

Whom did you mean?

LA FLÈCHE.

Misers.

LA FLÈCHE. (Aside) *A plague upon all  
misers and their avarice!*

L'AVARE, Act I., Sc. iii.  
VOL. IV., Page 34

# THE

THE

# THE

THE

# THE

THE

# THE

THE

# THE

THE

# THE

THE

# THE

THE

# THE

THE

# THE

THE







HARPAGON.

Who are they, those misers?

LA FLÈCHE.

Villains and skin-flints.

HARPAGON.

Whom do you mean by that?

LA FLÈCHE.

What are you troubling yourself about?

HARPAGON.

I trouble myself about a thing of consequence.

LA FLÈCHE.

Do you think I meant to speak of you?

HARPAGON.

I think what I think; but I choose that you shall tell me to whom you spoke when you said that.

LA FLÈCHE.

I spoke — I spoke to my hat.

HARPAGON.

And I — I'll comb your hair for you!

LA FLÈCHE.

Why do you hinder me from cursing misers?

HARPAGON.

I hinder you from gabbling and being insolent. Hold your tongue.

LA FLÈCHE.

I named no one.

HARPAGON.

I'll thrash you if you speak.

LA FLÈCHE.

He whose nose is running, let him blow it.

HARPAGON.

Will you be silent?

LA FLÈCHE.

Yes, if I can't help it.

HARPAGON.

Ha!

LA FLÈCHE, *showing Harpagon a pocket in his doublet.*

Look! here's another pocket. Now are you satisfied?



HARPAGON.

Give it up, and make me search no farther.

LA FLÈCHE.

Give what up?

HARPAGON.

That which you have taken.

LA FLÈCHE.

I've taken nothing at all.

HARPAGON.

Are you sure?

LA FLÈCHE.

Positive.

HARPAGON.

Adieu; and go to the devil!

LA FLÈCHE, *aside*.

A fine dismissal, faith!

HARPAGON.

Your conscience knows the truth.

## SCENE FOURTH

HARPAGON, *alone.*

That scoundrel of a valet annoys me horribly ; I can't endure to see the limping dog about. Truly, 't is no trifling care to have a sum of money in the house. Happy is he who has his all invested and only keeps the little that he needs for his expenses. It is indeed a worry to invent a faithful hiding-place ; for, to my thinking, safes are most unsafe, and I shall never trust to them. I think them a mere bait to robbers ; they are always the first things that thieves attack.

---

## SCENE FIFTH

HARPAGON, ÉLISE AND CLÉANTE *talking together at the back*HARPAGON, *thinking himself alone.*

And yet I don't know that I did quite right to bury in the garden that last ten thousand crowns in gold they paid me yesterday. Ten thousand crowns in gold is quite enough to— (*seeing Élise and Cléante, aside*) Heavens ! have I betrayed myself ? These cares upset

me! I fear I spoke aloud when thinking to myself. (*To Élise and Cléante*) What is it?

CLÉANTE.

Nothing, father.

HARPAGON.

How long have you been there?

CLÉANTE.

We have just come in.

HARPAGON.

You heard? —

CLÉANTE.

What?

HARPAGON.

The —

ÉLISE.

What, father?

HARPAGON.

What I was saying.

CLÉANTE.

No

HARPAGON.

Yes, you did, you did.

ÉLISE.

Excuse me.

HARPAGON.

I see quite well you overheard some words. I was discussing with myself the difficulty that we have in these days in getting money, and I said a man was lucky if he had ten thousand crowns.

CLÉANTE.

We feared to enter lest we might disturb you.

HARPAGON.

I am glad to tell you this, so that you may not make mistakes and fancy that I said I *had* ten thousand crowns.

CLÉANTE.

We do not ask to know of your affairs.

HARPAGON.

I would to God I had ten thousand crowns!

CLÉANTE.

I do not think —

HARPAGON.

'T would be a great affair for me;

ÉLISE.

But these are matters that —



HARPAGON.

I have much need of them;

CLÉANTE.

I think —

HARPAGON.

So large a sum would ease my mind;

CLÉANTE.

You are —

HARPAGON.

I should not then complain, as I do now,  
that times are hard.

CLÉANTE.

Good heavens! father, why should you complain? All the world knows that you are rich enough.

HARPAGON.

What! rich enough! Those who said that have lied. Nothing could be more false; whoever spread that rumor is a rascal.

ÉLISE.

Don't get so angry, father.

HARPAGON.

It is amazing that my own children should betray me and become my enemies.

CLÉANTE.

To say that you are rich, is that to be your enemy ?

HARPAGON.

Yes; such talk, and the expenses you incur will cause a robber to break into this house some night and cut my throat, thinking that I am made of ducats.

CLÉANTE.

What great expenses have I incurred ?

HARPAGON.

What expenses ? Was ever anything more scandalous than the sumptuous equipage in which you drive about the town ? I blamed your sister yesterday, but this is worse; this cries to heaven for vengeance. From head to foot there is enough upon your body to furnish an annuity. I have told you a score of times, my son, that all your ways are most displeasing to me; you ape a lord, and to go dressed like that you needs must rob me.

CLÉANTE.

Rob you ! how ?

HARPAGON.

Do I know how ? But if you do not rob me where do you get the means to keep the style you do ?

CLÉANTE.

I, father ? Well, I gamble ; and as I have good luck I spend the money that I win upon myself.

HARPAGON.

Then you do wrong. If you have luck at play you ought to profit by it, and put the money that you win at honest interest, so as to save it for a future time. I wish to know — not speaking of the rest — what good there is in all these ribbons with which you are tricked out from head to foot, and whether half a dozen aiguillettes are not enough to hook your breeches. What is the vast necessity of spending money upon wigs when you can wear your natural hair which costs you nothing ? I 'll lay a wager that in that wig and ribbons there are twenty pistoles at the least ; and twenty pistoles would give you eighteen francs, six sous, eight farthings, invested at no more than eight per cent.

CLÉANTE.

You are right.

HARPAGON.

Well, let us say no more about this now, and talk of something else. (*Observing that Cléante and Élise are making signs to each other*) Hey! (*Aside*) They are making signs to steal my purse! (*Aloud*) What is the meaning of those gestures?

ÉLISE.

We were disputing, my brother and I, which should speak first; for we have both something to say to you.

HARPAGON.

And I have something to say to both of you.

CLÉANTE.

It is of marriage, father, that we wish to speak.

HARPAGON.

It is of marriage that I mean to talk to you.

ÉLISE.

Oh, father!

HARPAGON.

Why that cry? Is it the word, my daughter, or the thing that frightens you?



CLÉANTE.

Marriage may well alarm us both seen from your point of view ; we fear that our feelings on the subject may not accord with yours.

HARPAGON.

Patience ; do not alarm yourselves. I am aware of what is due to both of you, and you shall have no cause, neither the one nor the other, to complain of what I do. So, to begin at the end, (*to Cléante*) have you ever seen, my son, a certain young lady, living not far from here, whose name is Mariane ?

CLÉANTE.

Yes, father.

HARPAGON.

And you, my daughter ?

ÉLISE.

I have heard of her.

HARPAGON.

What do you think of her, my son ?

CLÉANTE.

I think her charming.

HARPAGON.

What of her countenance ?

CLÉANTE.

Most virtuous, and full of soul.

HARPAGON.

Her air and manner ?

CLÉANTE.

Admirable, beyond a doubt.

HARPAGON.

Do you not think a girl like that deserves to  
be sought in marriage ?

CLÉANTE.

Yes, father ; yes.

HARPAGON.

That such a match would be desirable ?

CLÉANTE.

Most desirable.

HARPAGON.

You think that she has all the signs of a  
good housekeeper ?

CLÉANTE.

I 'm sure of it.

HARPAGON.

And that a husband would find great satisfaction with her?

CLÉANTE.

Undoubtedly.

HARPAGON.

There is one difficulty. I fear she may not have the property she ought to have.

CLÉANTE.

Oh! father, property is not of such importance when the question is of marrying an honest girl.

HARPAGON.

Excuse me as to that, my son. But what I have to say is this: if we do not find in her the property we need we can endeavor to recoup it in some other way.

CLÉANTE.

That 's understood.

HARPAGON.

Well, I am very glad to find you share my feelings. Her upright bearing and her docility

have won my heart, and I 'm resolved to marry her,—provided I find she has some little means.

CLÉANTE.

Oh-h!

HARPAGON.

What?

CLÉANTE.

You say you are resolved —

HARPAGON.

To marry Mariane.

CLÉANTE.

Who? You — you?

HARPAGON.

Yes; I, I, I. What means all this?

CLÉANTE.

I am seized with sudden giddiness — I must go!

HARPAGON.

'T is nothing: go to the kitchen and drink a glass of pure cold water.

## SCENE SIXTH

HARPAGON, ÉLISE

HARPAGON.

Here 's my dainty popinjay ! — with no more vigor than a fowl. Now, my daughter, you see what I 'm resolved on for myself. As for your brother, I have chosen a certain widow, who came to see me here this morning. As for you, I give you to the Seigneur Anselme.

ÉLISE.

The Seigneur Anselme!

HARPAGON.

Yes; a man of middle age, prudent, wise, with a large property, and only fifty.

ÉLISE, *making a curtsey.*

I do not mean to marry, father, if you please.

HARPAGON, *mimicking her.*

And I, my little girl and *mimi*, I mean that you shall marry, if you please.

ÉLISE, *curtseying again.*

Excuse me, father.



HARPAGON, *mimicking her*.

Excuse me, daughter.

ÉLISE.

I am the very humble servant of the Seigneur Anselme, but (*curtseying again*) with your permission, I shall not marry him.

HARPAGON.

I am your very humble servant, but (*mimicking her*) with your permission, you will marry him to-night.

ÉLISE.

To-night?

HARPAGON.

To-night.

ÉLISE, *curtseying again*.

I shall not do so, father.

HARPAGON, *mimicking her*.

You will do so, daughter.

ÉLISE.

No.

HARPAGON.

Yes.

ÉLISE.

No, I tell you.

HARPAGON.

Yes, I tell you.

ÉLISE.

That is a thing to which you can't compel me.

HARPAGON.

That is a thing to which I shall compel you.

ÉLISE.

Then I shall kill myself rather than marry such a husband.

HARPAGON.

You will not kill yourself, and you will marry him. But what audacity is this? Who ever heard of a daughter talking to her father in this way?

ÉLISE.

Who ever heard of a father marrying a daughter in this way?

HARPAGON.

No one can say a word against the match. I'll warrant you that all the world will approve of such a choice.

ÉLISE.

And I will warrant you that not a single sensible person will approve of it.

HARPAGON, *seeing Valère in the distance.*

Here's Valère; will you let him judge between us of this affair?

ÉLISE.

Yes, I consent to that.

HARPAGON.

Will you give in to his opinion?

ÉLISE.

I will go by what he says.

HARPAGON.

Very good; that's settled.



SCENE SEVENTH

VALÈRE, HARPAGON, ÉLISE

HARPAGON.

Come here, Valère; we have selected you to say which of us two, my daughter or myself, is right.

VALÈRE.

You, monsieur, without a doubt.

HARPAGON.

Do you know the subject of our dissension?

VALÈRE.

No, but you must be right, you are so wise.

HARPAGON.

I wish to give her, this very evening, to a husband who is both virtuous and rich; and the hussy tells me to my nose she scorns to take him. What do you say to that?

VALÈRE.

What do I say to that?

HARPAGON.

Yes.

VALÈRE.

Ha! ha!

HARPAGON.

What do you mean?

VALÈRE.

I mean that I agree with you in the main, and that your judgment is invariably right. But, on the other hand, she is not altogether wrong, and —

HARPAGON.

What! when I tell her that the Seigneur Anselme is an admirable match? He's a nobleman who is noble; gentle, wise, sedate, and well-to-do, and one who has no child by his first marriage. Could she find a better husband?

VALÈRE.

True. But she may say that you are hurrying matters; and that she wants a little time to see if her inclinations lead her to the match.

HARPAGON.

It is an opportunity that must be clutched. I am offered an advantage which I could never find elsewhere,—he offers to take her without a dowry.

VALÈRE.

Without a dowry?

HARPAGON.

Yes.

VALÈRE.

Ah! then I say no more. That is a most convincing argument; I yield to that.

HARPAGON.

To me it is a most important saving.



VALÈRE.

Undoubtedly; there's no denying that. 'Tis true your daughter may insist that marriage is a greater matter than you regard it; that it concerns the happiness or misery of all her life; and that a tie which lasts until her death should not be entered into without caution.

HARPAGON.

No dowry!

VALÈRE.

Yes, you are right; that settles all. Some may tell you that a daughter's inclination is a thing you ought to heed, and that so great an inequality, in years, in temperament, in feeling, renders a marriage liable to grievous shocks.

HARPAGON.

No dowry!

VALÈRE.

Ah, yes! there's no reply to that. Who the devil could stand against that argument? No matter if scores of fathers would rather make the happiness of their daughters than make money out of them,—fathers who would not sacrifice their children to self-interest; who seek, before all else, to give to marriage those

sweet harmonies which guard its honor, its tranquillity, its joy, and —

HARPAGON.

No dowry!

VALÈRE.

True, true; that shuts the mouth of every one. No dowry! how can so strong a reason be resisted?

HARPAGON, *aside, and looking into the garden.*

Ha! I hear the barking of a dog. Is some one digging for my money? (*To Valère*) Wait here; I shall be back directly.



SCENE EIGHTH

VALÈRE, ÉLISE

ÉLISE.

Are you joking, Valère, to talk to him in that way?

VALÈRE.

I do it not to aggravate him, and to get sooner to our end. There are minds that we must take obliquely; natures that resist all opposition; restive temperaments which balk at

truth, and stiffen themselves against the straight and narrow way of reason. Such minds are led by decoying them into the ways they ought to go. Seem to consent to what they wish and you will come the sooner to your ends.

ÉLISE.

But this marriage, Valère ?

VALÈRE.

We 'll find a means to break it off.

ÉLISE.

But how, if he intends it to take place to-night ?

VALÈRE.

Ask for delay ; pretend an illness.

ÉLISE.

Yes, but the trick will be discovered if he calls in a doctor.

VALÈRE.

Oh ! you 're joking ; what does a doctor know ? You can invent what illnesses you please, and he will tell you what has caused them and give the reasons why.

## SCENE NINTH

HARPAGON, VALÈRE, ÉLISE

HARPAGON, *in the background.*

'T was nothing, thank God!

VALÈRE, *not seeing Harpagon.*

At any rate, our last resource is flight, which will make all things safe; and if your love, my beautiful Élise, is capable of firmness (*sees Harpagon*) — Yes, a daughter must obey her father. It is not for her to consider what the husband is. When the great argument of *no dowry* is produced, she must be ready to accept whatever is provided for her.

HARPAGON.

Good; that is well said, indeed!

VALÈRE.

Monsieur, I beg your pardon if I go too far and take a liberty in speaking to your daughter as I do.

HARPAGON.

No, no; I am delighted; and I wish you to assume an absolute power over her. (*To Élise, who is going away*) Yes, you may want to fly,

but I give him the authority over you which Heaven has given to me; and I intend that you shall do exactly as he says.

VALÈRE, *to Élise.*

*After that,* will you resist my arguments?



## SCENE TENTH

HARPAGON, VALÈRE

VALÈRE.

Monsieur, with your permission I will follow her and continue the lessons I have now begun.

HARPAGON.

Do so, and you'll oblige me greatly. Certainly —

VALÈRE.

'T is well to hold the reins a little tight.

HARPAGON.

True, and we ought to —

VALÈRE.

Give yourself no uneasiness; I think that I can bring your ends about.



HARPAGON.

Do what you will. I am going now to take a little turn about the town, but I shall soon be back.

VALÈRE, *addressing Elise and going to the side by which she went away.*

Yes, money is more precious than all else in life. You should give thanks to Heaven for the worthy husband your father chooses for you. He knows life, and when the Seigneur Anselme offers to take you without a dowry there's nothing further to be said. All is summed up in that; no dowry stands in place of looks, youth, birth and honor, wisdom and integrity.

HARPAGON.

Ah! the fine fellow! That's talking like an oracle. Happy indeed am I to have a steward of that mind.

END OF FIRST ACT.

## Act Second



## SCENE FIRST

CLÉANTE, LA FLÈCHE

CLÉANTE.

HA! traitor that you are! where have you poked yourself? Did n't I order you —

LA FLÈCHE.

Yes, monsieur; and I was here, waiting your orders like a post; but your father, the most malicious of men, drove me away in spite of all that I could say; I ran some risk of being beaten.

CLÉANTE.

How is that business getting on? Things are more pressing than ever, for since I saw you I have made the discovery that my father is my rival.

LA FLÈCHE.

Your father in love!

CLÉANTE.

Yes; and I have had the greatest trouble to conceal from him the anxiety into which the news has thrown me.

LA FLÈCHE.

He to be meddling with love! What the devil does he mean? Is he flouting the world? Was love invented for a man of his cut?

CLÉANTE.

'T is for my sins this passion has got into his head!

LA FLÈCHE.

But why do you conceal from him your love?

CLÉANTE.

To cause him less suspicion, and keep, if possible, some outlet by which to defeat this marriage. What answer did they make you?

LA FLÈCHE.

Faith, monsieur, those who borrow money get the worst of it; a man must swallow many things when he is reduced, like you, to fall into the hands of money-sharks.

CLÉANTE.

Then I can't have the money?

LA FLÈCHE.

Beg pardon, monsieur. Maître Simon, the broker to whom they sent us, an active man and full of zeal, says he has taken desperate pains for you; he vows your countenance alone has won his heart.

CLÉANTE.

Shall I have the fifteen thousand francs I want?

LA FLÈCHE.

Yes, but on certain trivial conditions, which you must accept if you wish the matter to go through.

CLÉANTE.

Did he send you to the man who is to lend the money?

LA FLÈCHE.

No, truly; the matter is n't done in that way. The lender takes more care than even you to hide himself; there's greater mystery in such affairs than you may think for. Maître Simon won't even tell the lender's name. But he is to have a conference with you to-day, in a hired house, in order to hear from your own lips about your family and your property. And

I've no doubt that the mere mention of your father's name will make things easy.

CLÉANTE.

Principally because, my mother being dead, my father can't deprive me of her property.

LA FLÈCHE.

See! here are the conditions which the lender dictated to our go-between,—requesting that they may be shown to you before the matter should go farther. (*Reads.*) “Provided the lender sees all securities; provided also that the borrower be of age, and comes of a family with ample, safe, substantial property clear of all incumbrance, a proper and precise bond will be executed before a notary; the latter to be the most honest man in his profession, who, for this reason, must be chosen by the lender, to whom it is of chief importance that the deed be legally drawn.”

CLÉANTE.

I see no objection to that.

LA FLÈCHE, *reads.*

“The lender, not to burden his conscience with scruples, lends money only at five and a half per cent.”



CLÉANTE.

Five and a half! *Parbleu!* that's honest; nothing to complain of there.

LA FLÈCHE.

True. (*Reads.*) "But, as the said lender does not have in his possession the sum required, and therefore is obliged, in order to oblige the borrower, to borrow the money himself at twenty per cent, it is agreed that the above-named first borrower must pay the said interest in addition to his own, inasmuch as it is only to oblige him that the said lender takes the loan."

CLÉANTE.

Who the devil is this man! a Jew? an Arab? Why! that's more than twenty-five per cent!

LA FLÈCHE.

True; so I said. You'll have to be cautious and look into this.

CLÉANTE.

Look into it! How do you expect me to look into it? I want the money, and I shall have to agree to it all.

LA FLÈCHE.

That's the answer I gave Maître Simon.

CLÉANTE.

What else ?

LA FLÈCHE.

Only one other little clause. (*Reads.*) "Of the fifteen thousand francs demanded the lender can only pay down in ready money the sum of twelve thousand francs; the remaining three thousand the borrower must take in goods and chattels, consisting of clothing, jewelry, and furniture comprised in the annexed inventory, which the said lender has appraised, in good faith, at the lowest possible price."

CLÉANTE.

What does that mean ?

LA FLÈCHE.

Listen to the inventory : "First, one bed on four feet, with bands of Hungary point, neatly appliquéd on olive-green cloth, with six chairs and counterpane of the same; all in good condition and lined with taffetas shot red and blue. Also, one tester with ends, of good Aumale serge, ashes of roses, with silk fringe and tassels."

CLÉANTE.

What does he expect me to do with that?

LA FLÈCHE.

Wait. (*Reads.*) "Also, a tapestry of the loves of Gombaud and Macée. Also, one large walnut table, with twelve turned columns or pillars which pull out at each end; and six stools of the same beneath it."

CLÉANTE.

Do I want such things, *morbleu*!

LA FLÈCHE.

Have patience. (*Reads.*) "Also, three large muskets, inlaid mother of pearl, with matched sights. Also, one brick furnace, with two retorts and three receivers, suitable for distilling."

CLÉANTE.

It is infuriating!

LA FLÈCHE.

Gently. (*Reads.*) "Also one Bologna lute with all its strings, or nearly all. Also, one bagatelle-board, one back-gammon-board, one game of goose, revived from the Greeks, suitable for passing the time when there is nothing to do."

Also, one lizard-skin, three and a half feet long, stuffed with hay, suitable to hang on the wall of a bedroom. All the above-mentioned articles, actually worth over four thousand five hundred francs, are put down to the value of three thousand by the good-will of the lender."

CLÉANTE.

A plague upon his good-will, villain and cut-throat that he is! Who ever heard of such usury? He is not content with the savage interest he exacts, but he must needs oblige me to take a third of the loan in rubbish he has picked up in the streets! I sha'n't get a hundred crowns for it; and I am actually compelled to agree to his terms; he is in a position to make me accept anything, for he holds me, the wretch! with a dagger at my throat.

LA FLÈCHE.

I see, monsieur, begging your pardon, that you're in the broad road Panurge took to ruin; getting money in advance, buying dear, selling cheap, and burning your candle at both ends.

CLÉANTE.

How can I help it? This is what young men are brought to by the cursèd avarice of fathers;

and people are surprised, after this, that sons should wish them dead!

LA FLÈCHE.

Well, I do say your father would rouse the soberest man in the world against his niggardliness. I have n't, thank God, any gallows-bird propensities, and among my fellows, whom I see engaged in various little schemes, I know how to keep out of scrapes which deserve hanging; but, for all that, your father, by his proceedings, leads me into such temptation to rob him that I do believe if I did I should do a meritorious action.

CLÉANTE.

Give me that inventory; I want to look it over.



SCENE SECOND

HARPAGON, MAÎTRE SIMON; CLÉANTE AND  
LA FLÈCHE *in the background*

MAÎTRE SIMON.

Yes, monsieur; he is a young man who is much in need of money; his affairs are urgent, he must get it, and he will doubtless agree to all you require.



HARPAGON.

But are you sure, Maître Simon, that I run no risk? Do you know the name, property, and family of this young man?

MAÎTRE SIMON.

No; I can't inform you on those points. I only heard of him by chance; but he will, himself, explain his affairs to you. His man assures me that you cannot fail to be perfectly satisfied when you have seen him. All that I can tell you is that his family is very rich; he has no mother, and he is willing to bind himself, if you wish, in case his father dies within eight months.

HARPAGON.

Well, that's something, certainly. Charity, Maître Simon, requires us to do good to others when we can.

MAÎTRE SIMON.

That's understood, of course.

LA FLÈCHE, *low to Cléante, recognizing Maître Simon.*

What's all this? Here's Maître Simon talking to your father.

CLÉANTE, *low to La Flèche.*

Can any one have told him who I am? Have you betrayed me?

MAÎTRE SIMON, *to Cléante and La Flèche.*

Ha! ha! you are in a hurry! Who told you this was the house? (*To Harpagon*) Monsieur, it was not I who revealed to them your name and residence. But there's no harm, as I think, in their knowing it. They are very discreet persons, and you can now have a full understanding with them.

HARPAGON.

How so?

MAÎTRE SIMON, *motioning to Cléante.*

Monsieur is the person I mentioned who wishes to borrow fifteen thousand francs from you.

HARPAGON, *to Cléante.*

What, scoundrel! is it you who have taken to these criminal ways?

CLÉANTE.

What! is it you, father, who are guilty of these shameful actions?

(*Maître Simon escapes, La Flèche hides himself.*)

## SCENE THIRD

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE

HARPAGON.

It is you, is it, who wish to ruin yourself by these disgraceful loans?

CLÉANTE.

So, 't is you, is it, who seek to enrich yourself by this criminal usury?

HARPAGON.

How dare you, after this, appear before me?

CLÉANTE.

How dare you present yourself, after such an action, before the eyes of the world?

HARPAGON.

Have you no shame, I ask you, in coming to such debauchery, rushing into frightful expenses, and disgracefully dissipating the property your parents have amassed for you by the sweat of their brow?

CLÉANTE.

Do you not blush at the dishonor you bring upon your name by this traffic that you practise,

sacrificing honor and reputation to an insatiable lust of amassing gold, and charging an interest far beyond the most infamous extortions ever invented by the worst usurers?

HARPAGON.

Out of my sight, villain! Out of my sight, I say!

CLÉANTE.

Who is the most criminal, think you, — he who buys the money which he needs, or he who steals the money he does not want?

HARPAGON.

Go, I tell you! and irritate my ears no longer with such talk. (*Alone*) I am not sorry for this adventure after all; it warns me to keep a closer eye than ever on his actions.



SCENE FOURTH.

FROSINE, HARPAGON

FROSINE.

Monsieur —

HARPAGON.

Wait a minute; I'll return and speak with you. (*Aside*) It is time I took a little turn around the gold.

[*Exit.*]

## SCENE FIFTH

LA FLÈCHE, FROSINE

LA FLÈCHE, *not seeing Frosine.*

A queer adventure! He must have, somewhere, an ample stock of goods of all kinds, for we did not recognize a single thing upon that inventory.

FROSINE.

Ah! 't is you, my poor La Flèche. How is it we meet here?

LA FLÈCHE.

Ha! ha! so it is you, Frosine! What are you doing here?

FROSINE.

What I do everywhere, — managing for other people, making myself useful to them, and profiting as best I can by the few talents I possess. In this world we must live, as *you* know, by our wits; and to persons in my position, Heaven has given no other means than trickery and intrigue.

LA FLÈCHE.

Have you any dealings with the master of this house?



FROSINE.

Yes; I am managing an affair for him, out of which I expect a profit.

LA FLÈCHE.

From him? Ha, faith! you'll be clever if you get anything out of him. I warn you that money is a very scarce article in this house.

FROSINE.

There are certain services which touch a man amazingly.

LA FLÈCHE.

I'm your humble servant, but you don't know Seigneur Harpagon. Seigneur Harpagon is of all human beings the human being who is least human, the hardest and most grasping mortal of all mortals on this earth. There is no service which can move his gratitude to open his purse. Flattery, esteem, benevolence in words, friendship, as much as you please, but money—not one bit of it! There's nothing more barren than his good-will. *Give* is a word for which he has such an aversion that he won't even say, "I give you good-day," only "I wish you good-day."

FROSINE.

Oh, heavens! I know the art of milking men. I have a secret way of getting at their feelings, tickling their hearts, and finding their weak spots.

LA FLÈCHE.

All nonsense here. I defy you to soften the man in question on his money side. He's a Turk on that point, of a turkery to baffle the world. You may kill him, but you can't shake him. In a word, he loves money more than reputation, honor, or virtue; and the sight of any one who asks for it gives him fits. It strikes his vitals, it stabs his heart, it tears his bowels out, and if — But here he comes, and I depart.

---

SCENE SIXTH

HARPAGON, FROSINE

HARPAGON, *to himself*.

All is safe. (*Aloud*) Well, what is it, Frosine?

FROSINE.

Dear me! monsieur, how well you look; your face is the very picture of health.

HARPAGON.

Mine?

FROSINE.

I never saw your complexion so fresh and blooming.

HARPAGON.

What, seriously?

FROSINE.

Yes; you have never in your life seemed as young as you are now. I've known many men of twenty-five look older than you.

HARPAGON.

Nevertheless, I'm over sixty, Frosine.

FROSINE.

Well, sixty; what of that? 't is n't worth thinking of. In fact, sixty is the flower of a man's age; you are about to enter on the best season of your life.

HARPAGON.

True; but twenty years less would do no harm, I fancy.

FROSINE.

Are you joking? You don't need it; a man of your constitution will live to be a hundred.

HARPAGON.

Do you really think so?

FROSINE.

I know it; you have every sign of it. Come a little nearer. There, between your eyes, I see the mark of a long life.

HARPAGON.

Have you studied signs?

FROSINE.

Yes. Show me your hand. Heavens! what a line of life!

HARPAGON.

Where?

FROSINE.

Follow that line; don't you see where it goes?

HARPAGON.

Well, what does that mean?

FROSINE.

Faith! I said a hundred years; but you'll go beyond the six twenties.

HARPAGON.

Is it possible?

FROSINE.

You 'll never die in your bed, and you 'll put your children and your children's children underground.

HARPAGON.

So much the better. But now, how is that matter coming on?

FROSINE.

Why do you ask? Did you ever know me to undertake a thing in which I did not triumph? For marriages especially I have a wonderful talent. There are no pairs that I can't find means to couple together in a very little time. I think, if I took it into my head, I could marry the Grand Turk to the Republic of Venice. Of course there are not such great difficulties in the present affair. As I had business with these ladies, I was able to talk of you. I told the mother plainly the plan you have conceived about Mariane from seeing her pass in the street or sitting at her window.

HARPAGON.

What answer did she make?



FROSINE.

She received the proposition with joy. And when I intimated to her that you strongly desired that her daughter should be present to-night when your daughter's marriage-contract is signed, she consented at once and agreed that I should bring her.

HARPAGON.

The fact is, Frosine, I am compelled to give a supper this evening to Seigneur Anselme, and I am very glad that Mariane should be present at the feast.

FROSINE.

You are right. After dinner she is to call upon your daughter; and then she expects to take a turn around the fair before coming to your supper.

HARPAGON.

Well, then, they shall go together in my coach, which I will lend them.

FROSINE.

That will suit her very well.

HARPAGON.

But, Frosine, did you sound the mother about the property she is able to give her daughter?

Did you tell her that she must do something in that way, make an effort, bleed herself a little on an occasion like this? No girl is ever married without some sort of dowry.

FROSINE.

Why! she's a girl who will stand you in at least twelve thousand francs a year.

HARPAGON.

Twelve thousand francs!

FROSINE.

Yes. In the first place, she has been brought up to the greatest economy in food. She is a girl accustomed to live on salads, milk, cheese, apples; she doesn't require a well-served table, exquisite dishes, perpetual barley-broths, or any of those delicacies which other women demand, — things that are no trifles, and which mount up, by the end of the year, to at least three thousand francs. Besides this, she is fond of simple clothing; she doesn't care for splendid gowns, or rich jewels, or sumptuous furniture in which other women indulge with such extravagance; that alone is fully worth four thousand francs a year to you. Moreover, she has a horrible aversion to cards; which is not at all a

common thing in women now-a-days; for I know some in our quarter who have lost at *trente-et-quarante* over twenty thousand francs this year. But allow for a quarter only of that. Five thousand francs a year, cards; four thousand, clothes and jewels; that's nine thousand; and three thousand for food, and there's your twelve thousand a year in hand.

HARPAGON.

Yes, all that's very well; but there's nothing real in such a reckoning.

FROSINE.

Excuse me; do you mean to say there is nothing real when you receive in marriage a dowry of great abstemiousness, a love of simplicity in dress, and a vast fund of hatred for cards?

HARPAGON.

It is a poor jest to make a dowry out of expenses she will not incur. I shall not give a receipt for what I don't receive. I must have money down for that.

FROSINE.

Heavens! you'll have money enough; they have talked with me about a certain place in

the country where they have property of which you will be the master.

HARPAGON.

I must be sure of it. But, Frosine, there's another thing that makes me anxious. The girl is young, as you see, and young people, as a rule, like those of their own age best and seek their company. I am afraid a man of my years may not be to her taste; and that might lead to certain disturbances in my home, which would n't suit me at all.

FROSINE.

Ah! how little you know her. That is another peculiarity which I meant to tell you. She has a strong aversion for young men, and likes none but old ones.

HARPAGON.

She?

FROSINE.

Yes, she. I wish you could hear her talk about it. She can't bear even the sight of a young man; but nothing delights her more, she says, than to see a fine old man with a majestic beard. The older he is, the more charming he seems to her; and I warn you not to try to make yourself look younger than you are. She

wants a sexagenarian at the very least. It is not more than six months since she was on the point of being married, and she broke the engagement simply because her lover let her know he was only fifty-six and did n't wear spectacles.

HARPAGON.

Certainly that's a most uncommon thing.

FROSINE.

It goes farther than I can tell you. There are certain pictures and engravings in her room, and what do you suppose they are? Adonis, Paris, Apollo, Cephalus? No! they are fine portraits of Saturn, King Priam, Nestor, and good old Anchises on his son's back.

HARPAGON.

How admirable! It is something I should never have expected. I am glad to know that such is her disposition. In fact, if I had been a woman myself I should never have liked young men.

FROSINE.

I believe you. Poor trash indeed for a woman to love! Fine popinjays, i' faith, fine callants to set young girls agog about them! I'd like to know what there is so tempting in a young man.



HARPAGON.

For my part I cannot comprehend it; I don't know why the women should love them as they do.

FROSINE.

Women are downright fools. To think youth lovable — what nonsense! Are these blond stripplings men? How can a woman be attached to such young animals?

HARPAGON.

So I say daily; look at that milk-sop air of theirs; and their three scraps of beard, sticking out like the cat's whiskers, and their tow wigs, and their slouching breeches, and their lean stomachs!

FROSINE.

Hey! they had need to be well set-up near a figure like yours. You're a man, indeed, that there's some satisfaction in looking at; men should be made and dressed like you to inspire love.

HARPAGON.

You think I look well?

FROSINE.

Why, of course. You are charming, you ought to be painted. Turn round a little,

please; nothing could be better. Let me see you walk. Now there's a well-made body,—free and easy in its motions, without a sign of physical weakness.

HARPAGON.

I haven't any, thank God — only my catarrh that troubles me now and then.

FROSINE.

That's nothing; your catarrh is n't so unbecoming, and you cough gracefully.

HARPAGON.

But tell me, please; has Mariane seen me? Does she observe me as I pass her window?

FROSINE.

No; but we have talked a great deal about you. I drew a picture of your person for her, and I did not fail to boast of your good qualities, and the advantage there would be in having such a husband.

HARPAGON.

You did well, and I thank you for it.

FROSINE.

I have a trifling request to make of you, monsieur. I am engaged in a lawsuit, which

I fear I may lose for want of a little money (*Harpagon looks grave*), and you could easily help me to win it if you would be so kind. You cannot think the pleasure she will take in seeing you. (*Harpagon smiles.*) Ah! how certain you are to please her! what an admirable effect that old-fashioned ruff will have upon her mind. But, above all, I know she will be charmed with those breeches, fastened to the doublet with aiguillettes; they are enough to make her in love with you; a lover with aiguillettes is a marvellously dainty morsel for her.

HARPAGON.

You delight me when you say that.

FROSINE.

Monsieur, my lawsuit is of the greatest consequence to me. (*Harpagon resumes his grave look.*) I am ruined if I lose it, and a very little help will save me. I wish you could have seen the pleasure she took in hearing me talk of you. (*Harpagon smiles again.*) Joy shone in her eyes, and I brought her, at last, to a state of extreme impatience to have the marriage finally concluded.

HARPAGON.

You have done me a great service, Frosine; I am, I acknowledge, under the greatest obligation to you.

FROSINE.

I beg you, monsieur, to grant me the little assistance that I have asked of you. (*Harpagon looks grave.*) It will set me on my feet again, and I shall be eternally obliged to you.

HARPAGON.

Adieu; I have my letters to finish.

FROSINE.

I assure you, monsieur, you never could relieve a greater need.

HARPAGON.

I shall order my coach to be ready to take you to the fair.

FROSINE.

I would not importune you if I were not forced to do so by sheer necessity.

HARPAGON.

I shall take care that supper is served early, that none of you be made ill by it.

FROSINE.

Do not refuse the favor I solicit. You have no idea, monsieur, the pleasure that —

HARPAGON.

I must go; they are calling me. Till we meet again.

FROSINE, *alone*.

May a fever nip you, dog of a villain! the devil's in you! The old skin-flint was proof against every attack. Nevertheless, I sha'n't give up the negotiation. There's the other side; I am pretty sure to get something good out of that.

END OF SECOND ACT.



## Act Third

## SCENE FIRST

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, ÉLISE, VALÈRE, DAME CLAUDE,  
*holding a broom*; MAÎTRE JACQUES, LA MERLUCHE,  
BRINDAVOINE

HARPAGON.

NOW come here, all of you, that I may give my orders for to-night and regulate the employment of each. Approach, Dame Claude; I'll begin with you. (*She holds a broom.*) I see you come with arms in hand. To you I commit the care of cleaning everything; but be careful, as I have often told you, not to rub the furniture too hard, for fear of wearing it out. Besides this, I appoint you, during supper, to control the bottles; if any of them are broken or get lost, I shall charge the same to you, and deduct the cost from your wages.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *aside*.

A profitable punishment!

HARPAGON, *to Dame Claude*.

Go.

## SCENE SECOND

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, ÉLISE, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE  
JACQUES, LA MERLUCHE, BRINDAVOINE

HARPAGON.

You, Brindavoine, and you, La Merluche, I place you in charge of rinsing the glasses, and serving the wine ; but, serving it only, remember, when the guests are thirsty, and not according to the custom of certain forth-putting lacqueys, who come round enticing persons to drink when they are not thinking of it. Wait till you are asked more than once ; and remember to serve a great deal of water.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *aside*.

Yes ; pure wine gets into the head.

LA MERLUCHE.

Are we to take off our overalls, monsieur ?

HARPAGON.

Yes, when you see the guests arriving ; but be careful not to spoil your clothes.

BRINDAVOINE.

You know, monsieur, that one of the fronts of my doublet has a great spot of lamp oil on it.

LA MERLUCHE.

As for me, monsieur, my breeches have a great hole behind through which can be seen, saving your presence —

HARPAGON.

Peace! Turn that side cleverly to the wall and present the front of you to the company. (*To Brindavoine, showing him how to hold his hat so as to hide the grease-spot*) And you, hold your hat thus while you serve. Go.

---

SCENE THIRD

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, ÉLISE, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE  
JACQUES

HARPAGON.

As for you, my daughter, you will have an eye to what is served, and take care that there is no waste. That's a daughter's part. But, at the same time, I wish you to be prepared to receive my future wife, who is coming here to pay you a visit, and after that you are to go with her to the fair. Do you hear what I am saying to you?

ÉLISE.

Yes, father.

HARPAGON, *mimicking her*.

Yes, simpleton; go.



SCENE FOURTH

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

HARPAGON.

And you, my popinjay son, whom I have the kindness to forgive for your late proceedings, don't take it into your head to turn the cold shoulder to her.

CLÉANTE.

I, father? turn the cold shoulder! and why?

HARPAGON.

Heavens! don't we all know the way children behave when their parents marry, and the sort of eye with which they view what is called a step-mother? But if you wish me to forget your last escapade, I recommend you to show a friendly face to that young lady and give her the warmest welcome that you can.

CLÉANTE.

If I may speak the truth, father, I cannot promise to be very glad that she is to be my step-mother; I should lie if I said I was. But as for receiving her well, and showing her, as you say, a friendly face, I promise to obey you most scrupulously in that matter.

HARPAGON.

Take care to do so.

CLÉANTE.

You shall see that you have no ground for complaint.

HARPAGON.

You will do wisely.



SCENE FIFTH

HARPAGON, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

HARPAGON.

Valère, help me in this. Now, Maître Jacques, come forward; I have kept you for the last.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Is it as your coachman, monsieur, or as your cook that you wish to speak to me? Because I am both.



HARPAGON.

I speak to both.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

But which first?

HARPAGON.

The cook.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Then wait, if you please. (*Takes off his coachman's great-coat and appears in a cook's suit.*)

HARPAGON.

What the deuce is all this ceremony about?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

You have only to issue your orders.

HARPAGON.

I am obliged, Maître Jacques, to give a supper this evening.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *aside*.

What a wonder!

HARPAGON.

Tell me, can you provide a good one?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Yes, if you give me enough money.

HARPAGON.

The devil! always money! It seems as if they never have anything else to say but money, money, money! Ha! the only word they ever have on their lips is money! money! 'Tis their bosom friend and bed-fellow, money!

VALÈRE.

I never heard a more impertinent answer! Fine marvel that of providing a good supper when there's plenty of money! Why, 't is the easiest thing in the world; there's no poor cook that can't do that much. But for a clever fellow the thing is to provide good eating with little money.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Good eating with little money!

VALÈRE.

Yes.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Faith! Mr. Steward, you'd oblige us all very much if you'd make known that secret, and

take my place as cook ; you meddle here enough as a factotum.

HARPAGON.

Hold your tongue ! What is required ?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Here 's your steward, ask him ; he 'll give you good eating for little money.

HARPAGON.

Hi ! I choose that you shall answer me.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

How many will there be at the table ?

HARPAGON.

Eight or ten ; but allow for eight only. When there 's enough for eight there 's enough for ten.

VALÈRE.

That 's so.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Well, then, you want four large soups and five entrées. Soups, entrées —

HARPAGON.

What the devil do you mean ? That 's enough for the whole town.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

A roast —

HARPAGON, *putting a hand over the cook's mouth.*

Traitor! you're making ducks and drakes of my property.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Side-dishes —

HARPAGON, *again covering his mouth.*

What! more?

VALÈRE, *to Maître Jacques.*

Do you want to kill all the guests? Did monsieur invite them here to murder them with victuals. Go and read the precepts of health, and ask your doctor if there's anything more prejudicial to mankind than excess in eating.

HARPAGON.

He is right.

VALÈRE.

Let me tell you, Maître Jacques, you and your compeers, that a table covered with too much food is a cut-throat; and to be a true friend to invited guests we must have frugality in the meals we provide, and — according to

the saying of an ancient classic — “ we must eat to live, and not live to eat.”

HARPAGON.

Ah! how well said! Let me embrace you for that saying. 'Tis the noblest sentence I ever heard in my life. “ We must live to eat, and not eat to ” — no, that is n't it. How did you say it ?

VALÈRE.

“ We must eat to live, and not live to eat.”

HARPAGON, *to Maître Jacques.*

Do you hear that? (*To Valère*) What great man said it ?

VALÈRE.

I can't recollect his name just now.

HARPAGON.

Remember to write those words down for me. I will have them printed in gilt letters over the chimney-piece in my dining-room.

VALÈRE.

I'll not forget. Now, about your supper; you have only to let me manage it. I will arrange it properly.

HARPAGON.

Then do so.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

So much the better; I'll be rid of the trouble.

HARPAGON, *to Valère*.

You had better have certain things of which persons cannot eat much, and so they are sooner satisfied, — a good greasy stew and a pâté in a pot with plenty of chestnuts. That will be an abundance.

VALÈRE.

Rely upon me.

HARPAGON.

Now, Maître Jacques, I want my coach cleaned.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Wait a moment; that is addressed to the coachman. (*Puts on his great coat.*) You were saying —

HARPAGON.

That you must clean my coach, and get the horses ready to drive to the fair.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Your horses, monsieur? Faith, they are not in condition to go. I won't say they are in the



straw, for the poor beasts have n't any, and 't would be saying what is n't so; but you have starved them so severely that they are nothing but scarecrows, phantoms, skeletons of horses.

HARPAGON.

Why should they be ill? They don't do any work.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Must they go without eating because you don't use them? Poor animals! they had better be made to work much, and fed the same. It breaks my heart to see them nothing but skin and bone; for after all, I love my horses. I feel as if it were myself when I see them suffer. I take the food out of my own mouth for them often; it is too hard-hearted, monsieur, to have no pity on our dumb neighbors.

HARPAGON.

It won't be hard work for them just to go to the fair.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Monsieur, I have n't the heart to drive them; and I should be ashamed to strike them with the whip in the state they are in. How do you expect them to drag a coach when they can't drag themselves?

VALÈRE, *to Harpagon.*

Monsieur, I'll make neighbor Picard drive them; and he can also help us in getting supper ready.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

So be it; I'd rather they died under another hand than mine.

VALÈRE.

Maître Jacques plays philosopher —

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Mr. Steward plays truckler —

HARPAGON.

Peace!

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Monsieur, I can't tolerate flatterers. I see what your steward is after, — perpetually keeping account of the bread and wine, the salt and candles; he is only tickling you to get your favor! I'm furious at it; and very sorry every day of my life, to hear what is said of you. For, after all, I do feel a kindness for you in spite of everything, and, after my horses, you are the person in the world whom I like best.

HARPAGON.

May I be informed by you, Maître Jacques, what people say of me?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Yes, monsieur, if I were sure you would n't get angry.

HARPAGON.

I will not, in any way.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Excuse me, but I know very well I shall put you in a passion.

HARPAGON.

Not at all. On the contrary, you will give me pleasure. I am glad to know what people say of me.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Well, monsieur, since you wish it, I will tell you frankly that you are laughed at everywhere. Hundreds of jokes are going the rounds about you; folks like nothing better than to put you in the pillory and tell tales of your stinginess. One says you've had a special almanac printed, with double the number of ember-days and vigils, so as to make more fasts for your household. Another says you always pick a quarrel

with your valets about New Year's time, or just when they leave your service, so as to have an excuse for not making them a present. This one declares you summoned your neighbor's cat before the assizes for eating up the scraps of your leg of mutton; and that one says he met you one night stealing the oats of your own horses; and that your coachman (the one before me) gave you, in the darkness, I don't know how many blows with a stick, about which you never ventured to say anything. In short — am I to tell you the whole? — one can't go anywhere that one does n't find you chopped into mince-meat. You are the talk and laughing-stock of everybody; and no one ever speaks of you by any other name than miser, extortioner, niggard, skin-flint —

HARPAGON, *beating Maître Jacques.*

You are a fool, a scoundrel, a knave, and an impudent rascal!

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

There! did n't I guess right? You would n't believe me. I warned you I should put you in a passion if I told the truth.

HARPAGON.

Learn to speak properly.

[*Exit.*

## SCENE SIXTH

VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

As far as I can see, Maître Jacques, your frankness is rather ill-paid.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

*Morbleu!* Mr. New-comer, who try to play the lord here, it is none of your business. Laugh at your own drubbings when you get them and don't come here and laugh at mine.

VALÈRE.

Ah! Monsieur Maître Jacques, don't be vexed, I beg of you.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *aside*.

He's mealy-mouthed! I'll bluster and if he's fool enough to fear me I'll pommel him a bit. (*Aloud*) Laugh as you please, but let me tell you I don't laugh, not I; and if you get my temper up I'll make *you* laugh on the other side of your mouth. (*Maître Jacques pushes Valère to the farther end of the room, threatening him.*)

VALÈRE.

Here, here, gently!

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Ho! gently, is it? I don't choose to be gentle, I don't.

VALÈRE.

I beg of you —

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

You are an impudent fellow.

VALÈRE.

Monsieur Maître Jacques —

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

There's no Monsieur Maître Jacques for a double-faced sneak. If I take a stick I'll thrash the importance out of you.

VALÈRE.

What! a stick, will you? (*Valère pushes Maître Jacques in turn to the wall.*)

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

No, no; I did n't say that.

VALÈRE.

Do you know, you saucy fellow, that I'm a man who is likely to give you a good drubbing yourself —

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

I don't doubt it.



VALÈRE.

And that you are nothing after all but a poor jack of a coachman?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

I know that.

VALÈRE.

But you don't know me as yet.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Forgive me!

VALÈRE.

You'll thrash me, will you?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

I said it in joke.

VALÈRE.

Well I don't like your style of joke (*giving Maître Jacques some blows with a stick*). Learn from that that you are a pretty poor jester. [*Exit.*]

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *alone.*

Hang sincerity! it is a bad trade; henceforth I renounce it, and I'll never tell the truth again. I don't so much mind my master beating me,—he has some right to do it; but as for that steward, I'll be revenged if I can.

## SCENE SEVENTH

MARIANE, FROSINE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

FROSINE.

Do you know if your master is at home,  
Maître Jacques?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Yes, he is — as I happen to know too well.

FROSINE.

Then tell him, if you please, that we are  
here.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *looking at Mariane.*

Ha! she is n't amiss.



## SCENE EIGHTH

MARIANE, FROSINE

MARIANE.

What a singular position I am in, Frosine;  
if I may say what I feel, I dread this meeting.

FROSINE.

But why? what makes you so uneasy?

MARIANE.

Alas! why do you ask it? Can you not conceive the fears of a girl who is on the point of beholding the wretchedness to which persons seek to bind her?

FROSINE.

I see that Harpagon, though he may die opportunely, is not the wretchedness which you would like to embrace. Your behavior shows me plainly that the fair young man you have talked to me about is a good deal in your mind.

MARIANE.

Yes. I do not wish to deny it, Frosine; the respectful visits which he has paid to us have, I acknowledge, had some effect upon my heart.

FROSINE.

Do you know who he is?

MARIANE.

No, not in the least. But this I do know: he is made to be loved; and if I could have things my way, I would rather take him for a husband than any other man. I own that he counts for not a little in the dreadful horror I feel at this husband they want to give me.

FROSINE.

Oh! goodness; all these fair youths are charming, and talk love-talk mighty well; but most of them are poor as rats. You had much better take an elderly husband who can give you means. I will admit that your senses won't be gratified in the match I propose, and that you may have some little offensiveness to put up with in such a husband. But it won't last long; and his death, I assure you, will leave you in a position to marry a man you like better, and make all things right at last.

MARIANE.

Oh! Frosine, what a strange condition of things! In order to be happy I must wish and wait for a person's death! And death does not always come to suit our plans.

FROSINE.

Are you jesting? You only marry him on the understanding that you will soon be a widow; it ought to be one of the articles in the contract. He'll be very perverse if he is not dead in three months. Here he comes in person.

MARIANE.

Oh! Frosine, what a looking man!

## SCENE NINTH

HARPAGON, MARIANE, FROSINE

HARPAGON.

Do not be offended, my fair one, if I come to you in spectacles. I know that your charms are too apparent to the eyes, too visible in themselves, to need spectacles to see them; but it is with glasses that the stars are observed, and I maintain and guarantee that you are a star, — a star indeed, the loveliest star in the whole firmament of stars. Frosine! she makes no answer, and shows, it seems, no joy in seeing me.

FROSINE.

Because she is still confused. Besides, girls are ashamed to show at once the feelings of their heart.

HARPAGON.

You are right. (*To Mariane*) Here, fair charmer, is my daughter, who comes to welcome you.

## SCENE TENTH

HARPAGON, ÉLISE, MARIANE, FROSINE

MARIANE.

I fear I have too long delayed my visit, madame.

ÉLISE.

You do, madame, that which I should have done. It was for me to have forestalled your visit.

HARPAGON, *to Mariane.*

You see how tall she is; but ill weeds grow apace.

MARIANE, *low to Frosine.*

Oh! the unpleasant man!

HARPAGON, *to Frosine.*

What says the beauty?

FROSINE.

That she admires you much.

HARPAGON, *to Mariane.*

You do me too much honor, adorable darling!

MARIANE, *aside.*

What a vulgar creature!



HARPAGON.

I am greatly obliged to you for your sentiments.

MARIANE, *aside*.

I cannot bear this any longer.



SCENE ELEVENTH

HARPAGON, MARIANE, ÉLISE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE,  
FROSINE, BRINDAVOINE

HARPAGON.

Here is my son, who comes to pay his duty to you.

MARIANE, *low to Frosine*.

Ah! Frosine, what a meeting! 'T is he of whom I spoke to you!

FROSINE, *low to Mariane*.

A marvellous mishap!

HARPAGON.

I see you are surprised to find that I have grown-up children. But I shall soon dispose of both of them.

CLÉANTE, *to Mariane.*

Madame, to tell the truth, I did not expect these circumstances. My father surprised me not a little when he told me, just now, of the plans that he had formed.

MARIANE.

And I may say the same. This unexpected meeting surprises me as much as it does you. I was not prepared for such a circumstance.

CLÉANTE.

'Tis true that my father, madame, could not have made a finer choice, and that the honor of seeing you is a keen joy to me; but, for all that, I cannot say to you that I rejoice in the plan by which you will become my step-mother. That congratulation, I must confess, I cannot offer; it is a title which, if you please, I do not wish you to possess. This greeting may seem brutal to the eyes of some, but I feel confident that you are one who will take it as I mean it. This is a marriage, madame, to which, as you will readily imagine, I feel a strong repugnance. You cannot be ignorant, knowing who I am, that it comes as a shock to my interests, and you will suffer me to tell you,

by permission of my father, that if the matter depended upon me this marriage would not take place.

HARPAGON.

That is the most impertinent congratulation. What sort of a confession is that to make to her?

MARIANE.

And I, in answering you, must say that things are much the same with me. If you feel a repugnance to seeing me your step-mother, I feel no less a one to seeing you my step-son. Do not think, I beg of you, that it was I who sought to give you this disquietude. I should be grieved indeed to cause you pain, and if I were not forced to this proceeding by despotic power, I give you my word I would not consent to a marriage that so grieves you.

HARPAGON.

She is right. A foolish compliment should be answered in its folly. I beg your pardon, fair one, for my son's impertinence. He's a young fool, who does not know the consequences of the words he utters.

MARIANE.

I assure you that what he said has not in the least offended me. On the contrary, by explain

ing his real feelings he gave me pleasure. I like this frank avowal of them; and if he had spoken otherwise I could not have esteemed him as I do.

HARPAGON.

It is most kind in you to wish to excuse his faults. Time will bring him wisdom, and you will find his feelings changed ere long.

CLÉANTE.

No, father; my feelings are not capable of change; and I most earnestly entreat madame not to believe they are.

HARPAGON.

What madness to continue thus!

CLÉANTE.

Would you have me false to my true feelings?

HARPAGON.

Again! Have you no wish to change your tone?

CLÉANTE.

Well, since you insist upon my speaking in another manner — allow me, madame, to take my father's place and say that I have never seen in all the world a being so charming as

yourself. I can conceive of nothing to equal the happiness of pleasing you; the title of your husband is a glory, a felicity I should prefer to the fortunes of the greatest prince on earth. Yes, madame, the happiness of possessing you is, to my thinking, the noblest of all fates; there is nothing I am not capable of doing to win so precious a conquest; and the powerful obstacles —

HARPAGON.

Gently, gently, if you please, my son.

CLÉANTE.

I am paying these compliments to madame on your account.

HARPAGON.

*Morbleu!* I have a tongue to pay them for myself; I do not need an interpreter like you. Come, place chairs.

FROSINE.

No; we should do best to go to the fair at once, so as to get back sooner, and have more time for the entertainment.

HARPAGON, *to Brindavoine.*

See that the horses are put to.

## SCENE TWELFTH

HARPAGON, MARIANE, ÉLISE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE,  
FROSINE

HARPAGON, *to Mariane.*

I beg you, my fair one, to excuse me for not having thought to offer you a trifling collation before going to the fair.

CLÉANTE.

I have seen to that, father, and have ordered dishes of China oranges, sweet lemons, and confectionery, which I sent for on your account.

HARPAGON, *aside to Valère.*

Valère !

VALÈRE.

He has lost his senses.

CLÉANTE.

Perhaps you are thinking, father, that that is not enough. Madame will have the kindness to excuse it, I am sure.

MARIANE.

It was quite unnecessary.



CLÉANTE.

Did you ever see, madame, a more brilliant diamond than the one my father wears on his little finger?

MARIANE.

It sparkles brightly.

CLÉANTE, *taking the diamond from his father's finger and giving it to Mariane.*

You should see it closer.

MARIANE.

It is indeed most beautiful, — of the finest water.

CLÉANTE, *placing himself before her when she wishes to return the diamond.*

No, no, madame, it is in too good hands. That is a present which my father makes to you.

HARPAGON, *aside.*

I!

CLÉANTE.

Father, is it not true that you desire madame to keep that diamond for love of you?

HARPAGON, *low to his son.*

What do you mean?

CLÉANTE.

Fine question! (*To Mariane*) He signs to me to urge you to accept it.

MARIANE.

But I do not wish —

CLÉANTE, *to Mariane*.

Oh! you are jesting; he does not wish to take it back.

HARPAGON, *aside*.

I'm mad with rage!

MARIANE.

It would be —

CLÉANTE, *still preventing Mariane from returning it*.

No, no, I tell you; you will offend him.

MARIANE.

I entreat —

CLÉANTE.

No, no!

HARPAGON, *aside*.

A pestilence upon him!

CLÉANTE.

See! he is scandalized by your refusal.

HARPAGON, *low to his son.*

Ah, traitor!

CLÉANTE, *to Mariane.*

Notice how hurt he is.

HARPAGON, *low to his son, threatening him.*

Torturer!

CLÉANTE.

Father, 'tis not my fault; I have done my best to make her keep it, but she is obstinate.

HARPAGON, *low to his son, threatening him.*

Robber!

CLÉANTE, *to Mariane.*

You have made my father angry with me, madame.

HARPAGON, *low to his son, same gestures.*

Scoundrel!

CLÉANTE, *to Mariane.*

I fear he will be ill; for Heaven's sake, madame, refuse no longer.

FROSINE, *to Mariane.*

Heavens! what a fuss! do keep the ring, since monsieur wishes it.

MARIANE, *to Harpagon.*

In order not to anger you I keep the diamond,  
and I will take some other time to give it back.



SCENE THIRTEENTH

HARPAGON, MARIANE, ÉLISE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE,  
FROSINE, BRINDAVOINE

BRINDAVOINE.

Monsieur, here is a man who wants to speak  
to you.

HARPAGON.

Tell him I am engaged, and let him call another time.

BRINDAVOINE.

He says he has some money for you.

HARPAGON, *to Mariane.*

I beg you to excuse me; I will return immediately.

## SCENE FOURTEENTH

HARPAGON, MARIANE, ÉLISE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE,  
FROSINE, LA MERLUCHE

LA MERLUCHE, *rushing in knocks down*

*Harpagon.*

Monsieur —

HARPAGON.

Ah! I am killed!

CLÉANTE.

What is it, father? Have you hurt yourself?

HARPAGON.

That traitor is bribed by my debtors to break  
my neck!

VALÈRE, *to Harpagon.*

You are not much hurt.

LA MERLUCHE, *to Harpagon.*

Monsieur, I beg your pardon; I thought I  
ought to come in haste to tell you —

HARPAGON.

What, you brute?

LA MERLUCHE.

That the horses have lost their shoes.

HARPAGON.

Then take them quickly to the blacksmith.

CLÉANTE.

And while we wait to have them shod, father,  
I'll do the honors of the house, on your behalf,  
and show the lady to the garden, where the col-  
lation shall be served.



SCENE FIFTEENTH

HARPAGON, VALÈRE

HARPAGON.

Valère! I pray you give an eye to that.  
Save all you can; return it to the dealers.

VALÈRE.

Enough!

HARPAGON.

Oh, insolent son! does he want to ruin me?

END OF THIRD ACT.



## Act Fourth



## SCENE FIRST

CLÉANTE, MARIANE, ÉLISE, FROSINE

CLÉANTE.

LET us come in, we shall be better here. There are no suspicious persons about, and we can talk more freely.

ÉLISE, *to Mariane*.

Yes, my brother has confided to me the passion that he feels for you. I know the grief and the unpleasantness such obstacles are capable of causing us; and it is, I do assure you, with the utmost tenderness that I interest myself in your affairs.

MARIANE.

It is indeed sweet comfort when a friend like you takes interest in me; and I entreat you to give me ever that generous affection, which is so capable of softening the hardships of my fate.

FROSINE.

You are, I must say, most unlucky persons, both of you, not to have told me, before this happened, how matters stood. I could, no doubt, have saved you from this mischance and not have brought things to the point at which they are.

CLÉANTE.

How could we help it? My evil destiny has willed this thing. But, fairest Mariane, what resolutions have you made?

MARIANE.

Alas! have I the power of making any? Dependent as I am, what can I make but wishes?

CLÉANTE.

Then have I no support within your heart but wishes? Is there no tender pity; no helpful charity; no active love?

MARIANE.

What can I say to you? Put yourself in my place, and see what I can do. Advise me, order me. I trust myself to you; for I think you too right-minded to exact from me that which is not allowed by honor and propriety.

CLÉANTE.

Alas! to what am I reduced when you restrain me to the vexing sentiments of rigorous honor and scrupulous propriety!

MARIANE.

But what do you wish that I should do? Though I might disregard, myself, a number of those restrictions by which my sex is bound, I must have some consideration for my mother. She has brought me up with never-failing tenderness, and I could never bring myself to give her pain. Do all you can with her; employ your utmost efforts to win her sanction. You may do and say all that you please, and if success depends on my declaring what I feel for you I will consent to make her an avowal of my sentiments.

CLÉANTE.

Frosine, my good Frosine, will you not help us?

FROSINE.

Good faith! why ask? I'll do it with all my heart. By nature, as you know, I'm pretty human. Heaven did n't make me with a soul of iron; I am, indeed, too tenderly disposed to

render little services to those who love each other honorably. What can be done about it?

CLÉANTE.

Think, I entreat you.

MARIANE.

Throw light upon our difficulty.

ÉLISE.

Find some way to undo that which you did.

FROSINE.

'Tis difficult. (*To Mariane*) As for your mother, she is far from being unreasonable; perhaps we could win her over to transfer to the son the gift she is making to the father. (*To Cléante*) But the real trouble that I see is — that your father is your father.

CLÉANTE.

That is certain.

FROSINE, *to Mariane*.

I mean by that, he will be full of spite if you show that you reject him, and he would never, after that, consent to the marriage. The safest way to do is to make the rejection come from

him. Try, by every possible means, to disgust him with your person.

CLÉANTE.

You are right.

FROSINE.

Yes, I am right, for I know him well. That is the only way to manage him; but 't is the deuce and all to find a means. Wait! suppose we found a woman about my age and with my talents, actress enough to counterfeit a dame of quality by means of a train, made in all haste, and some queer name of countess or of marchioness from Lower Brittany! I've enough persuasion to make your father think that she possesses, beside her mansions, a hundred thousand crowns in current money, and that she is so mad in love with him and so desirous to be his wife that she is ready to give him all her property by marriage contract. I've not a doubt he'll lend an ear to such a prospect; for, though I know he loves you well, he loves his money better. If when dazzled by this bait, he gives consent to your affair, it matters little how or when he learns the truth about his marchioness.

CLÉANTE.

That's well thought of!

FROSINE.

Then let me carry it out. I've just be-thought me of a friend of mine who'll suit our purpose.

CLÉANTE.

If you succeed, you may be certain, Frosine, of my gratitude. But, charming Mariane, let us begin, I beg of you, by winning your mother to our side; it will at least be something to break off this marriage. Make every effort that you can; use all the power that her affection gives you; display, without reserve, those eloquent graces, those all-powerful charms that Heaven has placed upon your lips and in your eyes. Neglect not, I entreat you, to use the tender words, the gentle prayers, the sweet caresses to which, I am persuaded, nothing can be refused.

MARIANE.

I will do all I can, neglecting nothing.



## SCENE SECOND

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, MARIANE, ÉLISE, FROSINE

HARPAGON, *aside and unseen.*

Ha! what? My son kissing the hand of his intended step-mother! and his intended step-mother making no remonstrance! Can there be some mystery beneath all this?

ÉLISE.

Here comes my father.

HARPAGON.

The coach is ready; you can start when you please.

CLÉANTE.

If you are not going, father, I will attend these ladies.

HARPAGON.

No, stay here. They can very well go alone, and I want you.

## SCENE THIRD

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE

HARPAGON.

Now, my son, question of step-mother apart, what do you think yourself of that young person?

CLÉANTE.

What do I think?

HARPAGON.

Yes; of her air, her figure, her beauty, her wit?

CLÉANTE.

Oh! la, la.

HARPAGON.

But answer me.

CLÉANTE.

Well, to speak frankly, I have not found her what I thought she was. Her air is that of a downright coquette, her figure rather awkward, her beauty only middling, and her mind of the commonest. Don't think that I say this, father, to disgust you with her; step-mother for step-mother I'd as soon have her as another.

HARPAGON.

But you were telling her just now —

CLÉANTE.

I was only saying in your name a few soft things; I did it to please you.

HARPAGON.

Then you don't feel any inclination for her?

CLÉANTE.

I? none at all.

HARPAGON.

I am sorry; for that ends a thought which came into my mind. Seeing her here, among you all, I made a few reflections on my age; I felt that others might find much to say against my marrying so young a girl. This consideration made me willing to drop the matter; but, as I had asked her of her mother and pledged my word, I thought of giving her to you, not knowing of your aversion.

CLÉANTE.

To me?

HARPAGON.

To you.

CLÉANTE.

In marriage?

HARPAGON.

In marriage.

CLÉANTE.

Well, listen, father; 't is true she's little to my taste, but — to please you — I will bring myself to marry her, if you wish it.

HARPAGON.

No, I am more reasonable than you think me; I will not force your inclinations.

CLÉANTE.

Excuse me, but I am ready to make this effort for your sake.

HARPAGON.

No, no, my son; marriages without inclination are never happy.

CLÉANTE.

That may come later, father. Love, they say, is often the fruit of marriage.

HARPAGON.

No; on the man's side nothing should be risked in these affairs; distressing consequences

follow, for which I will not make myself responsible. If you had felt an inclination for her 't were well and good; but that not being so, I shall follow my first intention and marry her myself.

CLÉANTE.

Father, since matters have come to this, I must declare my heart and reveal to you our secret. The truth is I have loved her since first I met her on the Promenade. My intention was to ask you, this very day, to obtain her as my wife; the declaration of your sentiments and a fear of your displeasure alone withheld me.

HARPAGON.

Have you paid her any visits?

CLÉANTE.

Yes, father.

HARPAGON.

Often?

CLÉANTE.

Several, — for the time that has elapsed.

HARPAGON.

Did they receive you well?

CLÉANTE.

Very well; though without knowing who I am. That is why Mariane showed so much surprise on seeing me.

HARPAGON.

Have you declared your passion and the intention you have formed of marrying her?

CLÉANTE.

Of course; and I have even made some overtures to her mother.

HARPAGON.

Did she listen, on her daughter's account, to your proposal?

CLÉANTE.

Yes, most civilly.

HARPAGON.

And the daughter returns your love?

CLÉANTE.

If I may trust appearances, I am persuaded, father, that she feels a fondness for me.

HARPAGON, *low to Valère.*

I am glad to have learned this secret; it is just what I was trying to discover. (*Aloud*)



Now, my son, do you know what you must do? You must give your mind, if you please, to getting rid of this love of yours; you must cease all attentions to the lady I intend for myself, and you must marry, at once, the person I have picked out for you.

CLÉANTE.

Ha! is it thus you trick me? Very good; since things have come to this, I declare to you that I will never relinquish the love I feel for Mariane; there is no extremity to which I will not go to win her from you; and if you have, on your side, the consent of her mother, I have on mine other supports which will fight against you.

HARPAGON.

What! scoundrel, do you dare to cross my path?

CLÉANTE.

'Tis you who stand in mine; I was the first in date.

HARPAGON.

Am I not your father, and do you not owe me all respect?

CLÉANTE.

Sons are not bound to defer to a father's will in things of this kind. Love is no respecter of persons.

HARPAGON.

I will make you respect me, with a stout stick.

CLÉANTE.

I care nothing for your threats.

HARPAGON.

You shall renounce Mariane.

CLÉANTE.

I will not.

HARPAGON, *calling out.*

A stick! bring me a stick!



SCENE FOURTH

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Hey, hey, hey! messieurs; what's all this?  
What are you thinking about?

CLÉANTE.

I scorn it all.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *to Cléante*.

Ah! monsieur, gently.

HARPAGON.

To talk to me with such insolence!

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *to Harpagon*.

Ah! monsieur, for pity's sake!

CLÉANTE.

I shall not give way an inch.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *to Cléante*.

What! not to your father?

HARPAGON.

Let me get at him!

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

What! to your son? Wasn't it enough to thrash me?

HARPAGON.

I'll make you the judge of this affair, Maître Jacques, to prove I'm right.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

So be it. (*To Cléante*) Step aside, if you please.

HARPAGON.

I love a young woman whom I mean to marry ;  
and this scoundrel has the insolence to love her  
himself, and court her against my orders.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Ah! he is wrong.

HARPAGON.

Is it not a fearful thing that a son should  
enter into rivalry with his father? And ought  
he not, out of mere respect, to abstain from  
interfering with my affections?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

You are right. Stay where you are and let  
me talk with him.

CLÉANTE, *to Maître Jacques, who goes to him.*

Well, if he is willing to take you as the  
judge between us I won't hold back. I don't  
care who is judge, and I am willing to refer our  
differences to you, Maître Jacques.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

You do me much honor.

CLÉANTE.

I am in love with a young lady, who responds to my affection, receiving the pledges of my faith most tenderly, and my father must needs come and interfere with our love by making her an offer himself.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

He was undoubtedly wrong.

CLÉANTE.

Ought he not to be ashamed, at his age, to think of marrying? Is it becoming of him to be in love? should he not leave such occupations to younger men?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

You are right. He is foolish. Let me say two words to him alone. (*Goes back to Harpagon.*) Well, your son is not so obstinate as you think; he can be brought to reason. He says he knows the respect he owes you; he was carried away by his excitement, but he will not refuse to submit to your wishes, provided you will treat him more liberally than you do now, and will give him some other person in marriage with whom he can feel satisfied.

HARPAGON.

Ah! tell him that in that case, Maître Jacques, he may expect everything from me; and I leave him to choose any woman in marriage whom he pleases, except Mariane.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Very good; let me manage it. (*Goes to Cléante.*) Well, your father is not so unreasonable as you make him out. He tells me it was your violence that made him angry. It was only your way of proceeding that he disliked, and he is quite ready to agree to what you wish, provided you will behave more gently and treat him with the respect, deference, and submission which a son ought to show to his father.

CLÉANTE.

Ah! Maître Jacques, you can assure him that if he will give me Mariane he shall find me the most submissive of men; and I will never do anything against his wishes.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *to Harpagon.*

I have settled it; he consents to all you say.

HARPAGON.

Nothing could be better.



MAÎTRE JACQUES, *to Cléante.*

All is arranged; he is satisfied with your promises.

CLÉANTE.

Heaven be praised!

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Messieurs, you can talk together now, because you are agreed; you were about to quarrel simply for want of understanding each other.

CLÉANTE.

My good Maître Jacques, I shall be grateful to you all my life.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

It is not worth mentioning, monsieur.

HARPAGON.

You have given me pleasure, Maître Jacques, and you deserve some reward. (*Harpagon feels in his pocket, Maître Jacques holds out his hand; but Harpagon only pulls out his handkerchief, saying*) I shall remember it, I assure you.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Your humble servant, monsieur.

## SCENE FIFTH

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE

CLÉANTE.

I beg your pardon, father, for the anger which I showed.

HARPAGON.

That's all over.

CLÉANTE.

I assure you that I feel the utmost regret.

HARPAGON.

And I feel the utmost joy in finding you so reasonable.

CLÉANTE.

How good of you to forget my fault so quickly.

HARPAGON.

A father readily forgets the faults of his children when they return to their duty.

CLÉANTE.

Then you feel no resentment for my violent language?

HARPAGON.

You compel me not to do so by the respect and submission which you show.

CLÉANTE.

I promise you, father, that I will keep the remembrance of your goodness in my heart until I die.

HARPAGON.

And on my part I promise you that there is nothing you shall not obtain from me.

CLÉANTE.

Ah! father, I can ask you nothing more. It is enough that you give me Mariane.

HARPAGON.

What?

CLÉANTE.

I say, father, that I am quite content. I find all things in the goodness that bestows my Mariane upon me.

HARPAGON.

Who talked of bestowing Mariane upon you?

CLÉANTE.

You, father.

HARPAGON.

I?

CLÉANTE.

Why, of course.

HARPAGON.

What's all this? You promised to renounce her.

CLÉANTE.

I! renounce her!

HARPAGON.

Yes.

CLÉANTE.

Never!

HARPAGON.

You have not given up your claim to her?

CLÉANTE.

On the contrary, I hold to it more than ever.

HARPAGON.

What! again, you scoundrel?

CLÉANTE.

Nothing can change me.

HARPAGON.

Let me get at you, traitor!

CLÉANTE.

Do what you please.

HARPAGON.

I forbid you to come into my sight again!

CLÉANTE.

So much the better.

HARPAGON.

I discard you!

CLÉANTE.

Discard me.

HARPAGON.

I renounce you as my son!

CLÉANTE.

So be it.

HARPAGON.

I disinherit you!

CLÉANTE.

As you please.

HARPAGON.

I lay my curse upon you! [Exit.

CLÉANTE, *calling after him.*

I don't care for your curses.

## SCENE SIXTH

CLÉANTE, LA FLÈCHE

LA FLÈCHE, *coming from the garden with a casket in his hand.*

Ah! monsieur, I've met you in the nick of time. Follow me, quick!

CLÉANTE.

What is it?

LA FLÈCHE.

Follow me, I tell you. We are in luck.

CLÉANTE.

How?

LA FLÈCHE.

Here's your chance.

CLÉANTE.

What?

LA FLÈCHE.

I've had my eye on this all day.

CLÉANTE.

What is it?

LA FLÈCHE.

Your father's coffer which I've captured.



CLÉANTE.

How did you manage it?

LA FLÈCHE.

You shall know all. Let's get away; I hear him shouting.

---

## SCENE SEVENTH

HARPAGON, *coming from the garden without his hat and shouting.*

Robbers! robbers! thieves! murderers! Justice, great Heaven! I'm lost! I'm murdered! They've cut my throat! They've stolen my money! Who did it? What became of him? Where is he? Where has he hidden himself? What shall I do? Where shall I go?—or not go? That way?—this way? Who is it? Stop! (*Seizing himself by the arm.*) Give me my money, villain! Ah! 't is I. My mind is so troubled I don't know where I am, or who I am, or what I do. Alas! my poor money! my poor money! my friend, my dear friend!—have they deprived me of you? If you are taken from me I have lost my all,—my support, my consolation, my joy! Life is ended for me!

I have nothing more to do in this world. Without you I cannot live. All is over with me. I can bear no more. Let me die! I am dead — I am buried. Will no one restore my money? or restore my life by telling me where it is? Hey! what did you say? No one spoke; there's no one here. Whoever did it must have watched his time and taken just the moment when I was talking to that traitor of a son. Let me get out. I must call the police, and have the house searched, and everybody examined,—servants, valets, son, daughter, and myself. I see them there, all assembled! I suspect them all; they all look to me like thieves. Hey! what's that they are talking about? — the man who robbed me? What's that noise overhead? Can he be hiding there? For pity's sake, all of you, if you know anything about that robber tell me, tell me! Isn't he hiding down there among you? They are staring at me, and laughing. It will be found, I know, that they had some share in the robbery. Come, come! police! archers! provosts! judges! rack! torture! gibbet! hangman! I'll hang the whole of them, and if I don't recover my money I'll hang myself.

END OF FOURTH ACT.

*Act Fifth*

## SCENE FIRST

HARPAGON, A COMMISSARY OF POLICE

COMMISSARY.

LET me act in this affair. I know my business, thank God. It is no new matter for me to hunt up thieves; I wish I had as many sacks of a thousand francs as I have hung robbers.

HARPAGON.

It is the interest of all magistrates to take this matter up; for if they don't enable me to get back my money, I'll take the law of the law.

COMMISSARY.

We shall employ all requisite proceedings. How much did you say was in that casket?

HARPAGON.

Ten thousand crowns to a penny.

COMMISSARY.

Ten thousand crowns!

HARPAGON, *in tears.*

Ten thousand crowns.

COMMISSARY.

The theft is considerable.

HARPAGON.

There 's no torture great enough for the enormity of this crime. If it remains unpunished the most sacred things are no longer safe.

COMMISSARY.

What coin was the sum in?

HARPAGON.

Good louis-d'ors, and pistoles of full weight.

COMMISSARY.

Whom do you suspect of the robbery?

HARPAGON.

Everybody; and I wish you to put the whole town and suburbs under arrest.

COMMISSARY.

We must be careful not to frighten persons, but try to get proof quietly; after which, we can proceed by rigorous measures to the recovery of the sum which has been stolen from you.

## SCENE SECOND

HARPAGON, COMMISSARY OF POLICE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *entering and speaking back to some one without.*

I'll be back presently; meantime cut his throat, roast his feet, put him in boiling water, and hang him from the rafters.

HARPAGON.

Who? The man who robbed me?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

I'm talking of a sucking pig your steward has sent in for the supper, and I wish to cook it to my fancy.

COMMISSARY, *to Maître Jacques.*

Don't be alarmed; I'm not a man to accuse you unjustly; matters will be managed very quietly.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *to Harpagon.*

Is monsieur coming to your supper?

COMMISSARY.

You must hide nothing from your master, my good friend.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Faith! monsieur, I'll show him what I can do, and treat you all to the best of my powers.

HARPAGON.

That's not it.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

And if I don't give you as good cheer as I might it is the fault of that steward of yours, who clips my wings with the scissors of his economy.

HARPAGON.

Traitor! the matter is n't about your supper. I insist on your telling me where my money is, the money that has been stolen from me.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Money! stolen from you?

HARPAGON.

Yes, you rascal; and I'll have you hanged if you don't give it up.

COMMISSARY, *to Harpagon.*

Don't maltreat him, for Heaven's sake. I see by his face that he is an honest man, and will tell you what you want to know without



being put in prison. Yes, my friend, if you confess this thing no harm shall come to you, and you will be properly rewarded by your master. His money has been stolen; and it is n't possible but what you have some knowledge of the affair.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *aside*.

Here's my chance for revenge on that steward. Ever since he entered this house he's the favorite; they won't take any advice but his; and I don't forget the drubbing I got just now.

HARPAGON.

What are you muttering about?

COMMISSARY, *to Harpagon*.

Let him alone; he is preparing to do as you wish. I told you he was an honest man.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Monsieur, if you want me to tell you the truth, it is this: I think your dear steward has served you this trick.

HARPAGON.

Valère!

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Yes.

HARPAGON.

He who has seemed so faithful to me!

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Himself. I think it is he who robbed you.

HARPAGON.

On what grounds do you think so?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Grounds?

HARPAGON.

Yes.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

I think so — by what I think.

COMMISSARY.

But it is necessary to let us know what evidence you have.

HARPAGON.

Have you seen him prowling round the place where I put my money?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Yes, that I have. Where did you keep it?

HARPAGON.

In the garden.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Precisely. I have often seen him prowling in the garden. What was the money in?

HARPAGON.

A casket.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Exactly. I have seen him with a casket.

HARPAGON.

And that casket, what was it like? I shall know at once if it is mine.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

How was it made?

HARPAGON.

Yes.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Well, it was made — made like a casket.

COMMISSARY.

Of course; that's understood. But describe it, if you please.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

It was a large casket.

HARPAGON.

Mine was small.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Well, yes, if you take it that way; small in size, but I call it large for what it contained.

COMMISSARY.

What color was it?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

What color?

COMMISSARY.

Yes.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

It was the color of — well, some particular color; can't you help me to the name?

HARPAGON.

Eugh!

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Was n't it red?

HARPAGON.

No, gray.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Yes, that's it; gray-red, — exactly what I meant to say.

HARPAGON.

No doubt of it, that's my casket assuredly.  
(*To the Commissary*) Monsieur, write down

his deposition. Good God! whom shall I trust in future? We can swear by nothing in this world! After this, I could believe that I might rob myself.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *to Harpagon.*

Monsieur, here he comes now. Be sure you don't tell him it was I who told you this.

---

SCENE THIRD

HARPAGON, COMMISSARY, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

HARPAGON, *to Valère.*

Come here, and confess this infamous deed, this most horrible act that was ever committed.

VALÈRE.

What do you mean, monsieur?

HARPAGON.

Do you not blush for your crime, traitor?

VALÈRE.

What crime are you speaking of?

HARPAGON.

What crime am I speaking of, wretch? As if you did not know what I mean! In vain do

you pretend to disguise it; the truth is known; I have just heard all. To abuse my kindness in such a way! To foist yourself into my house in order to betray me, and to serve me a trick of so villanous a nature!

VALÈRE.

Monsieur, if you have indeed heard all, I will make no evasions; I will not deny the matter.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *aside*.

Ho! ho! did I guess right without knowing it?

VALÈRE.

It was my intention to speak to you; I was waiting for a favorable conjunction of circumstances. But, as things have happened, I can only conjure you not to be angry and to listen to my reasons.


HARPAGON.

What fine reasons can you give, pray, you infamous thief?

VALÈRE.

Ah! monsieur, I do not deserve such names. 'Tis true I have committed an offence toward you; but, after all, the fault is pardonable.





HARPAGON. *What fine reasons can you  
give, pray, you infamous thief?*

L'AVARE, Act V., Sc. iii.

VOL. IV., Page 160







HARPAGON.

What! pardonable? A stealthy crime! a killing blow of that kind!

VALÈRE.

For Heaven's sake, don't get angry. When you have heard me out you will see that the harm is not so great as you may think it.

HARPAGON.

Not so great as I may think it! What! to rob me of my blood, my very vitals, villain!

VALÈRE.

Your blood, monsieur, has not fallen into unworthy hands. I come of a stock which cannot harm it; and there is nothing in all this I am not able to repair.

HARPAGON.

It is my intention that you shall; you must at once make restitution of all that you have stolen.

VALÈRE.

Your honor, monsieur, shall be fully satisfied.

HARPAGON.

There is no question of honor in all this.  
But tell me, if you please, who led you to such  
an action?

VALÈRE.

Ah! how can you ask that question?

HARPAGON.

I do ask it.

VALÈRE.

A god, who bears his own excuse for what he  
does,— Love.

HARPAGON.

Love?

VALÈRE.

Yes.

HARPAGON.

Fine love! fine love, i' faith! A love of my  
louis-d'ors.

VALÈRE.

No, monsieur, no! 't was not your wealth  
which tempted me; that does not dazzle me,  
and I protest that I care nothing for your other  
riches if you will leave me that which I have  
won.



HARPAGON.

No! by all the devils, I'll do no such thing! Leave it to you? No! What insolence to wish to keep the thing he stole!

VALÈRE.

Do you call that stealing?

HARPAGON.

Do I call it stealing? a treasure such as that!

VALÈRE.

A treasure indeed; and the most precious that you have, undoubtedly; but it is not losing it to let me keep it. I ask it on my knees, that treasure full of charm. Indeed, you must bestow it on me now.

HARPAGON.

I shall not do so. Why, what talk is this?

VALÈRE.

We have pledged our mutual faith; we have sworn never to be parted.

HARPAGON.

An amazing oath indeed! a most ludicrous promise!

VALÈRE.

Yes, we are bound to each other — forever.

HARPAGON.

And I 'll prevent it, you may be sure of that.

VALÈRE.

Nothing but death can separate us.

HARPAGON.

You are devilishly set upon my money.

VALÈRE.

I have already told you, monsieur, that your money is not the interest that led me to do as I have done. My heart has not been moved by the springs you think. A nobler motive has inspired me.

HARPAGON.

He 'll say 't was Christian charity that made him steal my property! But I 'll settle him now! The law, bold villain, shall do justice on you.

VALÈRE.

You may do what you will with me; I am ready to bear what violence you please; but this I beg you to remember: if there is any wrong

in this affair 't is mine alone; your daughter has in nowise been to blame.

HARPAGON.

I should think not, verily! 'T would be strange, indeed, if my daughter were involved in crime. But I want my treasure; and you must now confess where you have taken it.

VALÈRE.

Taken it? Why, she is in your house.

HARPAGON, *aside*.

Oh! my dear casket! (*Aloud*) Still in my house, you say?

VALÈRE.

Yes, monsieur.

HARPAGON.

Ah! but you must have tampered with —

VALÈRE, *vehemently*.

I! monsieur? tamper with her? What wrong you do to both of us! 'T is with the purest, most respectful ardor that I burn —

HARPAGON, *aside*.

Burns for my casket!

VALÈRE.

I 'd rather die than manifest the least offensive thought; your treasure is too good, too virtuous for that.

HARPAGON. *aside.*

My casket virtuous!

VALÈRE.

All my desires have, hitherto, been limited to sight; and nothing evil has profaned the passion those fine eyes have inspired.

HARPAGON, *aside.*

The fine eyes of my casket! He talks like a lover of his mistress.

VALÈRE.

Monsieur, Dame Claude knows the whole truth, and she can testify —

HARPAGON.

What! my servant an accomplice in this deed?

VALÈRE.

Yes, she was witness of our pledge. When she saw how honest was my love, she helped me to persuade your daughter to give me her troth and to take mine.

HARPAGON, *aside*.

Hey! can fear of the law have turned his brain? (*To Valère*) Why do you mix my daughter's name in this?

VALÈRE.

Monsieur, I say that I have had the utmost difficulty in persuading her modesty to accept my love.

HARPAGON.

Whose modesty?

VALÈRE.

Why, your daughter's. 'T was only yesterday that she at last consented to agree to our mutual promise of marriage.

HARPAGON.

My daughter has given you a promise of marriage?

VALÈRE.

Yes, monsieur; and I have given the same to her.

HARPAGON.

Good heavens! another shock! —

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *to the Commissary*.

Write it down, monsieur, write it all down.

HARPAGON.

Increase of misery! additional despair! (*To the Commissary*) Come, monsieur, do the duty of your office. Make out the complaint against him as a thief and a seducer.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Yes, a thief and a seducer.

VALÈRE

Those are terms that do not apply to me; and when you all know who I am —



## SCENE FOURTH

HARPAGON, ÉLISE, MARIANE, VALÈRE, FROSINE,  
THE COMMISSARY, MAÎTRE JACQUES

HARPAGON.

Ah! shameless daughter! unworthy of a father such as I; is it thus you put in practice the lessons I have taught you? You suffer yourself to fall in love with a vile thief! You pledge your word to a rascal without asking my consent! Well, you are both mistaken in your hopes. (*To Élise*) Four good walls will guard your future conduct; (*to Valère*) and a stout gibbet, villain, will pay for your audacity.



VALÈRE.

Your passions, happily, cannot pass judgment upon this affair. The law will hear my side before condemning me.

HARPAGON.

I was wrong to say a gibbet; you shall die by torture on the rack.

ÉLISE, *flinging herself at her father's feet.*

Ah! father, have some human feeling; do not drive things to the worst with all the force of your paternal power. Take time to think what you had better do, instead of yielding to the first impulse of your passion. Be willing to examine him with whom you are now so angry. He is quite other than as you see him. You will not think it strange that I have pledged myself to marry him when you know that without his succor you would have lost your daughter. Yes, father, it was he who saved me from that great peril which, as you know, I met with on the water; to him I owe my life and —

HARPAGON.

All that is nothing; far better had it been to let you drown than do what he has done.

ÉLISE.

Father! I implore you by paternal love —

HARPAGON.

No, no, I say. I will hear nothing. The law must do its duty.

MAÎTRE JACQUES, *aside*.

My thrashing 's paid for.

FROSINE, *aside*.

What an extraordinary complication!



SCENE FIFTH

ANSELME, HARPAGON, ÉLISE, MARIANE, FROSINE,  
VALÈRE, THE COMMISSARY, MAÎTRE JACQUES

ANSELME.

What is the matter, Seigneur Harpagon? you seem disturbed.

HARPAGON.

Ah! Seigneur Anselme, you see in me the most unfortunate of men; trouble and disaster have befallen the marriage contract you have come to sign. I have been stabbed in property, stabbed in honor! Here is a traitor, a wretch,

who has violated the most sacred laws; who has wormed his way into my house, in the guise of a servant, to rob me of my money and seduce my daughter.

VALÈRE.

Who dreams of your money, which you fling in my face?

HARPAGON.

They have given each other promises of marriage. The affront is to you, Seigneur Anselme. It is you who ought to take the law upon him and incur the costs of bringing him to justice, in order to avenge this insolence toward you.

ANSELME.

It is not my intention to marry any one by force, or to claim a heart which is given to another. But as for your interests I am ready to take those up, as well as my own.

HARPAGON.

Monsieur here is a very worthy Commissary of Police who neglects, he tells me, none of the functions of his office. (*To the Commissary, motioning to Valère*) Accuse him, monsieur; and make the charge as criminal as possible.

VALÈRE.

I do not see what crime can be made of the love I bear your daughter, nor how you believe I can be punished for an engagement of marriage with her. When you know who I am —

HARPAGON.

I scorn such tales. Society in our day is full of noble swindlers, impostors, who take advantage of some accident, and insolently cloak themselves with the first illustrious name that comes into their head.

VALÈRE.

I would have you know that my honor is far too sound to let me deck myself with any name or anything that is not mine. All Naples can bear testimony to my birth.

ANSELME.

Not so fast, if you please. Be careful what you say. You risk far more than you think for; you are speaking before a man to whom all Naples is well known, and who can easily see through any tale you may invent.

VALÈRE, *putting on his hat with dignity.*

I am not a man who has anything to fear. If Naples is well known to you, you know the name of Don Thomas di Alburchi.

ANSELME.

Undoubtedly I know him; few men have known him better.

HARPAGON.

What do I care for Don Thomas or Don Martin? (*Harpagon, seeing two candles lighted, blows out one.*)

ANSELME.

For Heaven's sake, let him speak; we shall then know what he has to say.

VALÈRE.

I have to say that it was he who gave me birth.

ANSELME.

He?

VALÈRE.

Yes.

ANSELME.

Go! you are jesting. Find some other tale to serve your purpose better, and do not try to save yourself by such imposture.

VALÈRE.

Speak more civilly. It is not imposture. I make no claim I cannot prove.

ANSELME.

What! do you dare to call yourself the son of Thomas di Alburchi?

VALÈRE.

Yes, I dare; and I am ready to maintain that truth against whoever questions it.

ANSELME.

His audacity is amazing! Learn, to your confusion, that sixteen years ago, the man you speak of perished at sea, with his wife and children, whom he was seeking to remove from the cruel persecutions which followed the uprising in Naples, — persecutions which have caused the exile of many noble families.

VALÈRE.

Yes; but learn, to your confusion, that his son, then seven years old, was saved with his old servant from the wreck by a Spanish vessel; and this son is he who speaks to you. I was that child. The captain of the vessel, touched by my misfortunes, took pity on me; he brought me up as his own son, and put me in the army as soon as I was capable of bearing arms. Learn also that I have lately heard my father is not



dead. Passing through this city on my way to find him, an accident, by Heaven designed, enabled me to see the charming Élise. That sight made me a slave forever to her loveliness. The violence of my love and the severity of her father led me to introduce myself into this house and send another person in search of my lost parents.

ANSELME.

What proofs have you, beyond your word, which may assure us that this is not a fable based upon some truth?

VALÈRE.

My proofs are in the Spanish captain, who still lives; in a ruby seal which was my father's; an agate bracelet fastened by my mother on my arm, and my old Pedro, the servant who was saved as I was from the wreck.

MARIANE.

Ah! I can answer for your words; this is no fraud, and all you say proves clearly that you are my brother.

VALÈRE.

You, my sister?

MARIANE.

Yes. My heart was stirred the moment that I heard your voice; our mother, whose joy you now will make, has told me a thousand times of the misfortunes of our family. Heaven did not let us perish in that shipwreck, but it saved our lives at the cost of liberty. We were picked up by pirates, my mother and I, from a fragment of the vessel. After ten years of slavery a happy accident gave us our freedom; we returned to Naples, where we found our property all sold and nothing known about our father. From there we went to Genoa, where my mother recovered some small remnant of her patrimony, which others had squandered; and then we came to these parts, where she now lives a languishing life that is scarcely living.

ANSELME.

O Heaven! how marvellous are the signs of thy power! and how plainly dost thou show us that to thee alone belongs the right of doing miracles. Come, my children, to my arms, and join your joyful raptures to those of your father.

VALÈRE.

You, our father?

MARIANE.

Is it for you my mother has wept so long?

ANSELME.

Yes, my daughter; yes, my son. I am Don Thomas di Alburchi, whom Heaven rescued from the sea with all his property, and who, believing wife and children dead these sixteen years, was now about to seek in marriage with a sweet and virtuous girl the consolations of another family. The dangers to my life in Naples made me renounce that place forever, and, having sold the property I owned there, I have settled here under the name of Anselme; endeavoring to forget the griefs of which my other name was ever a reminder.

HARPAGON, *pointing to Valère*.

Is this your son?

ANSELME.

Yes.

HARPAGON.

Then I make you responsible for the payment of ten thousand crowns of which he has robbed me.

ANSELME.

He! robbed you?

HARPAGON.

Yes, he himself.

VALÈRE.

Who told you that?

HARPAGON.

Maître Jacques.

VALÈRE, *to Maître Jacques.*

Do you say that of me?

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

You see that I say nothing.

HARPAGON.

Here is the Commissary of Police who took his deposition.

VALÈRE.

Can you think me capable of so base an action?

HARPAGON.

Capable or not capable, I want my money.

## SCENE SIXTH

HARPAGON, ANSELME, ÉLISE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE,  
VALÈRE, FROSINE, THE COMMISSARY, MAÎTRE  
JACQUES, LA FLÈCHE

CLÉANTE.

Don't be so troubled, father, and, above all, make no accusations. I have discovered the whereabouts of your casket, and I have come to say that if you will let me marry Mariane your money shall be returned to you.

HARPAGON.

Where is it?

CLÉANTE.

Don't trouble about that. 'T is in a place which I will warrant; all depends on me. Tell me your decision; it is for you to choose, — either give me Mariane or lose your casket.

HARPAGON.

Has nothing been taken out of it?

CLÉANTE.

Nothing whatever. Think this over; make up your mind to accept this marriage, and to join your consent with that of her mother, who leaves her at liberty to choose between us.

MARIANE, *to Cléante*.

You do not know that this consent is not enough, and that Heaven has given me a brother (*motioning to Valère*), and also a father (*motioning to Anselme*), from whom you must obtain me.

ANSELME.

Heaven, my dear children, did not send me back to you that I should thwart your happiness. Seigneur Harpagon, you can readily believe that the choice of a young girl would fall upon the son rather than on the father. Come, do not make me say that which is not necessary to be heard. Consent, as I do, to this double marriage.

HARPAGON.

But I must, to give me counsel, see my casket.

CLÉANTE.

You shall see it safe and sound.

HARPAGON.

I have no money to give in marriage to my children.

ANSELME.

I have enough for all; let that not trouble you.



HARPAGON.

Will you bind yourself to pay the expenses of these marriages?

ANSELME.

Yes, I will bind myself. Does that satisfy you?

HARPAGON.

Yes; if you provide me with a suit of clothes for the wedding.

ANSELME.

Agreed. Come, let us enjoy the gladness this happy day has brought.

COMMISSARY.

Holà! messieurs, holà! Gently, if you please. Who pays me for these writings?

HARPAGON.

Your writings are no good to us.

COMMISSARY.

That may be; but I don't intend to have written them for nothing.

HARPAGON, *pointing to Maître Jacques*.

Take your payment in that man; I give him to you to hang.

MAÎTRE JACQUES.

Alas! what ought one to do in this world?  
Tell the truth and you'll get a drubbing; tell  
lies and they'll hang you.

ANSELME.

Seigneur Harpagon, you must forgive him  
this deception.

HARPAGON.

Then will you pay the Commissary?

ANSELME.

So be it. (*To Mariane and Valère*) Come,  
let us take our joy and share it with your  
mother.

HARPAGON.

And I'll to my dear casket.

END OF L'AVARE.



DON JUAN  
OR  
LE FESTIN DE PIERRE



*Comedy*  
IN FIVE ACTS

---

**The Scene is in Sicily.**

**The Scene is in Sicily.**



# DON JUAN

## Act First

*The stage represents a palace.*



### SCENE FIRST

SGANARELLE, GUSMAN

SGANARELLE, *holding a snuff-box.*

NO matter what Aristotle and all philosophy may say, there's nothing like tobacco. 'Tis the passion of decent folk; and he who lives without tobacco is n't worthy of living. Not only does it cheer and clear the human brain, but it teaches virtue to the soul, and we learn by means of it to be honest men. Haven't you observed, as soon as men take to tobacco, how obliging they become to others, and how delighted they are to hand it round to right and

left, wherever they are? They don't wait to be asked, they go in advance of people's wishes; so true is it that tobacco inspires sentiments of honor and virtue in all who use it.<sup>1</sup> But that's enough about it; let us go back to what we were saying. So it seems, dear Gusman, that your mistress, Donna Elvire, surprised by our departure, has come into the country in search of us; and her heart, which my master has touched too deeply, can't live, you say, unless she recovers him. Now, do you want me to tell you, between ourselves, what I think of all that? I'm afraid she will be ill-rewarded for her love; her journey to this town will have no good result, and I think you would have gained as much by not budging from where you were.

GUSMAN.

But your reasons for that? Tell me, Sganarelle, I beg of you, what has put such ill-omened fears into your head? Has your master opened his

<sup>1</sup> Tobacco was first brought to France by Nicot, ambassador of François II. to the court of Spain; it was called after him Nicotiane. The introduction of the plant gave rise to endless medical discussions, which lasted into Molière's time, for and against its sovereign virtue, and its value as a universal panacea.



mind to you on the subject? Did he tell you that he felt a coldness for us which compelled him to go away?

SGANARELLE.

No, he did not. But knowing how the land lies, I can guess pretty well how things will go; and though he has n't said anything to me as yet, I'd lay a wager they'll end as I say. I may be mistaken, but in such matters experience gives insight.

GUSMAN.

What! do you mean to tell me that this hasty departure means an infidelity on the part of Don Juan? Could he do such wrong to the chaste passion of Donna Elvire?

SGANARELLE.

He's still young; he has n't the courage —

GUSMAN.

A man of his quality to do so base an action!

SGANARELLE.

Pshaw! quality indeed! Fine reason, truly! As if that would hinder him from doing what he liked!

GUSMAN.

But the holy bonds of matrimony bind him.

SGANARELLE.

Ah! my poor Gusman, my good friend, believe me, you don't know the sort of man Don Juan is.

GUSMAN.

I don't know, that's true, the sort of man he is, if he really means to do us this treacherous wrong. But I can't comprehend why, after testifying such love, such impatience, after such urgent homage, entreaties, sighs, and tears, after so many passionate letters, ardent protestations, reiterated pledges, — in short, such transports, such vehement emotions, which drove him to force the sacred obstacle of a convent to get Donna Elvire into his power, — I cannot comprehend, I say, how, after all that, he should have the heart to go back upon his word.

SGANARELLE.

Well, I've no difficulty in comprehending it; and if you knew the individual as I do, you'd see the thing was easy enough to him. I don't say that he has changed in feeling to Donna Elvire; I am not yet certain of it. You know

that by his order I came away before him; and since his arrival here he has not said a word to me on the subject. But I'll tell you, in order to caution you, and *inter nos*, remember, that you behold in Don Juan, my master, the greatest scoundrel that ever walked the earth; a desperate fellow, a dog, a devil, a Turk, a heretic; who believes in nothing, neither heaven, nor saint, nor God, nor goblin; a man who spends his life like a veritable brute beast, a hog of Epicurus, a Sardanapalus, who shuts his ears to all Christian remonstrance, and treats the sacred things that men believe in as silly crotchets. You tell me that he has married your mistress; he'd have done more than that to satisfy his passion; he'd have married the cat and the dog and you, too. Marriage is nothing to him; that's the one trap by which he catches his various loves. He is a general espouser, who'll take anything, — lady, young lady, bourgeoisie, or peasant-woman; there's nothing too hot and nothing too cold for him. If I were to tell you the names of all those whom he has married in diverse places I should talk till midnight. You are surprised and pale at what I say; but I've given you only a sketch of this man; it needs a good many more touches to finish the portrait.

It is enough to say now that the wrath of Heaven must overtake him some day, and I know I'd much better be living with the devil than with him; he makes me witness such horrors that I often wish he was already — God knows where. A wicked great lord is a terrible thing. I am forced to be faithful to him in spite of all; fear takes the place of zeal in me, and puts a bridle on my feelings; it often forces me to praise what my soul detests. Here he comes to take a walk through the palace. We must part. Listen to me: I have told you this in confidence, frankly. It came rather quick, I fear, from my lips; if any part of it gets to his ears I shall boldly say that you have lied.



## SCENE SECOND

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON JUAN.

Who was that man you were speaking to? He looked, I thought, like Donna Elvire's good Gusman.

SGANARELLE.

That's pretty much what he did look like.

DON JUAN.

Then it was he?

SGANARELLE.

Himself.

DON JUAN.

How long has he been in this place?

SGANARELLE.

Since yesterday.

DON JUAN.

What brought him here?

SGANARELLE.

I should think you might guess what makes him uneasy.

DON JUAN.

Our departure, I suppose.

SGANARELLE.

The worthy man is mortified about it; he asked me to tell him the reason.

DON JUAN.

What answer did you make?

SGANARELLE.

That you had said nothing to me about it.

DON JUAN.

But what do you think yourself? What idea have you of this affair?

SGANARELLE.

I? Well, I think, not meaning any harm, that you have got some new love-affair on hand.

DON JUAN.

Faith! you are not wrong; I must confess that another object has driven Elvire from my mind.

SGANARELLE.

Ha! I know my Don Juan to my finger's end; I know his heart for the greatest rover on earth; he delights in flitting from one to another, and hates nothing so much as to stay in one place.

DON JUAN.

Tell me, don't you think I am quite right in that?

SGANARELLE.

Eh! monsieur —

DON JUAN.

Speak out.



SGANARELLE.

Certainly you are right if you wish to do so. No one can deny that. But if you would n't wish it, that might be another thing.

DON JUAN.

Well, I give you liberty to speak out; now let me hear your real sentiments.

SGANARELLE.

In that case, monsieur, I will tell you frankly that I don't approve of your ways; I think it is a villanous thing to make love on all sides as you do.

DON JUAN.

What! do you mean that a man should bind himself to the first woman who takes his fancy, renounce the world for her, and have no eyes for any other? A fine thing indeed to wish to pique one's self upon the honor of being faithful! to bury our lives in one passion, and be dead in youth to all the other beauties who strike our eyes! No, no; constancy is only fit for silly fools; all pretty women have the right to charm us; and the privilege of being the first to do so should not rob others of the just claim they each and all have on our hearts. For my part,

beauty delights me wherever I may find it; and I yield easily to the soft violence with which it lures me. I may be pledged elsewhere, but the love I have for one pretty woman does not oblige my soul to be unjust to others. I have eyes to see the merits of all, and I render to each the homage and the tribute to which nature impels me. Whatever comes of it, I cannot refuse my heart to what I see is lovable; if I had ten thousand hearts I should give them all the moment that a handsome face demanded them. Dawning inclinations, after all, have an inexplicable charm; and the chief pleasure of love is found in change. There's infinite sweetness in conquering by ceaseless assiduity the heart of a young beauty; in noting day by day some little progress; in combating by emotion, tears, and sighs the modest innocence of a soul reluctant to lay down its arms; in forcing, step by step, the various defences she erects; in vanquishing the scruples of what she thinks her honor, and in bringing her gently to the point we wish. But once her master, what more is there to say, what more to wish? All the beauty of our passion is over; we only sleep in the tranquillity of such a love until another object comes to waken our desires and

present to our hearts the attractive charms of another conquest. Nothing, I say, can be so sweet as to vanquish the resistance of a pretty woman. I have, on this point, the ambition of all conquerors, who go from victory to victory, and can never bring themselves to limit their field. Nothing can arrest the impetuosity of my desires. I have a heart capable of loving the whole earth, and, like Alexander, I wish there were other worlds to which I might extend my amorous conquests.

SGANARELLE.

Virtue of me! how you go on. You must have learned that by heart; you speak it like a book.

DON JUAN.

What have you to say about it?

SGANARELLE.

Faith! I've something to say, and yet I don't know what to say; for you handle the matter in such a manner that you seem right, though the truth is that you are not right. I had the finest thoughts in the world about all this, but your speech has muddled them. Let the matter go now; the next time I'll write my reasons down, and then we'll argue them.

DON JUAN.

You 'd better do so.

SGANARELLE.

But, monsieur, may I use the permission you gave me just now to say that I can't help being scandalized at the life you lead?

DON JUAN.

How? What life do I lead?

SGANARELLE.

Well, for example, when I see you marrying different women every month as you do.

DON JUAN.

Can anything be more agreeable?

SGANARELLE.

True; I can conceive that it is very agreeable and amusing; and I 'd like it well enough myself, if there was no harm in it. But, monsieur, to play with a sacred mystery and —

DON JUAN.

Pooh! that's an affair between Heaven and myself; we shall settle it together without your help.

SGANARELLE.

Ah! monsieur, but I've always heard it was a sorry joke to laugh at Heaven; and that libertines can never come to a good end.

DON JUAN.

Halt! master fool; you know I have always told you I don't like persons who remonstrate.

SGANARELLE.

I am not talking of you, may God forbid! You know what you do yourself, and if you believe in nothing, you have your reasons for not believing. But there are certain foolish young men in this world who are libertines without knowing why; who pretend to be free-thinkers because they think it becomes them. Now if I had a master among them, I should tell him plainly, looking him straight in the face: "How dare you trifle thus with Heaven? Do you not tremble to scoff as you do at sacred things? Is it for you, poor earthworm, little pygmy" (I'm speaking to the master I mentioned), — "is it for you to turn to ridicule what other men revere? Do you think because you are noble, and wear a well-curled flaxen wig, plumes in your hat, a gold-laced coat, and



flame-colored ribbons" (It is not to you I'm speaking, but to that other), — "do you think, I say, that you are the better man for that, that all things are allowable to you, and that no one will dare to tell you the truth? Learn of me, who am your valet, that sooner or later Heaven will punish impious men, that an evil life leads to an evil death, and that —"

DON JUAN.

Silence!

SGANARELLE.

What's in question now?

DON JUAN.

The question is to tell you that a beautiful woman has caught my heart; attracted by her charms I have followed her to this town.

SGANARELLE.

I wondered that you came here. Are you not fearful, monsieur, about the death of the Commander, whom you killed in this very place?

DON JUAN.

Why should I fear? Did n't I kill him thoroughly?



SGANARELLE.

Thoroughly! oh, yes, nothing could be more thorough; he had no reason to complain of that.

DON JUAN.

I was pardoned for that offence.

SGANARELLE.

Yes, but that pardon has not diminished, I think, the wrath and hatred of his relations and friends, and —

DON JUAN.

Pooh! never count on ills that may never happen; we should think only of what gives us pleasure. The lady whom I told you of just now is a young bride, the most agreeable woman in the world; she has been brought here by the man she has just married. Chance led me to meet this loving couple some three or four days before they made the journey. Never have I seen two people so pleased with each other, or so brimful of love. The tenderness which was visible in their mutual ardor gave me, in my turn, like emotions. I was struck to the heart, and my love began in jealousy. Yes, I could not endure to see them together; vexation gave birth to desire; I imagined the pleasure of

disturbing their intercourse, and of breaking up an attachment so wounding to the delicacy of my feelings. But up to this time all my efforts have been unavailing; and I now have recourse to a last expedient. This would-be husband is to take the lady for a trip on the water. Without saying anything to you, all is prepared to satisfy my love; I have engaged a boat and rowers, with which it will be easy to abduct my beauty.

SGANARELLE.

Ah! monsieur —

DON JUAN.

Hein!

SGANARELLE.

You've planned it well; you know what you're about. There's nothing in this life like getting what we want.

DON JUAN.

Make ready to come with me, and bring my weapons; see to this yourself, because — (*Perceives Donna Elvire.*) Ha! vexatious meeting! Traitor! you never told me she was here herself.

SGANARELLE.

You never asked me, monsieur.

DON JUAN.

She must be crazy not to have changed her style of dress, and to come here with all that sorry clothing!

---

SCENE THIRD

DONNA ELVIRE, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DONNA ELVIRE.

Do me the favor, Don Juan, to recognize me. May I not hope that you will deign to turn your face this way?

DON JUAN.

Madame, I must acknowledge that I am much surprised. I did not expect you here.

DONNA ELVIRE.

Yes, I plainly see that you did not expect me. You are surprised, in truth; but in quite another way than as I hoped; and the manner in which you show it proves to me that which I refused to credit. I wonder at my simplicity and the weakness of my heart in doubting a betrayal, of which so many circumstances ought to have convinced me. I confess I have been kind enough — or rather, I should say, foolish

enough—to wish to deceive myself; I have striven to deny to my heart the evidence of my eyes and my own judgment. I have sought reasons to excuse to my tenderness the abatement of your love; I have coined a score of legitimate motives for this precipitate departure, that I might acquit you of the crime my judgment charged against you. In vain my just suspicions daily spoke to me; I would not hear the voice that made you criminal. I listened eagerly to every fond delusion which proved you innocent to my heart. But your present greeting suffers me to doubt no longer; the glance by which I was received just now has taught me many things I fain would not have known. Still, I desire to hear from your own lips the reasons for your departure. Speak, Don Juan, I beg of you, and let me see what tone you take to justify your actions.

DON JUAN.

Madame, here is Sganarelle, who knows the reason why I came away.

SGANARELLE, *low to Don Juan.*

I, monsieur? if you please, I don't know anything.

DONNA ELVIRE.

Sganarelle, speak; it matters little from whose lips I hear his reasons.

DON JUAN, *signing to Sganarelle*.

Come, speak to madame.

SGANARELLE, *low to Don Juan*.

What must I say?

DONNA ELVIRE.

Come nearer; and, since it must be so, tell me the reasons of his strange departure.

DON JUAN.

Why don't you answer?

SGANARELLE, *low to Don Juan*.

I have n't any answer, — you must be jesting.

DON JUAN.

Answer, I tell you.

SGANARELLE.

Madame —

DONNA ELVIRE.

Well?

SGANARELLE, *turning to Don Juan*.

Monsieur —

DON JUAN, *threatening him.*

St —

SGANARELLE.

Madame, conquerors, Alexander, and other worlds, were the cause of our departure. There, monsieur, that is all that I can say.

DONNA ELVIRE.

Will you be so good, Don Juan, as to clear up these singular mysteries?

DON JUAN.

Madame, if I must tell the truth —

DONNA ELVIRE.

Ah! how meanly you defend yourself, for a man about the court who ought to be well wonted to this sort of thing. I pity you for the confusion in which I see you. Why not call to your assistance a fine effrontery? Why not swear to me that your sentiments are still unchanged; that you still love me with unequalled ardor; and that naught but death can part you from me? Why do you not say that affairs of sudden consequence obliged you to start without giving me due notice; that you must still remain here for a while; but if I will



return to whence I came you will follow me speedily; that you long to be with me because when absent you suffer as a body suffers parted from its soul? Why not defend yourself in this way? Why stand there speechless as you do?

## DON JUAN.

Madame, I must admit that I have not the talent of dissimulation, and that my heart is too sincere. I will not tell you that my feelings remain unchanged and that I long to join you, because 't is very certain that I meant to leave you,—not for the reasons which you may imagine, but for pure conscience' sake, because I now believe we can no longer live together except in mortal sin. Scruples have come to me, madame; the eyes of my soul are opened to what I do. I have reflected that to marry you I violated the sacred precincts of a convent; that you have broken vows which bound you elsewhere, and that God is jealous of such acts as these. Repentance seized me; I feared the wrath of Heaven; I felt our marriage was disguised adultery, which must bring punishment upon us from on high. In short, I saw it was my duty to endeavor to forget you, and to afford you the opportunity of returning to your

bonds. Madame, would you oppose so sacred a resolution, and have me, by returning to your side, call down the wrath of Heaven on our heads?

DONNA ELVIRE.

Ah! wretch, I know you now, and, for my misery, too late! such knowledge can only serve to drive me to despair. But hear me; your crime shall not remain unpunished, for the same Heaven of which you make this mockery will avenge me for this betrayal.

DON JUAN.

Sganarelle, Heaven!

SGANARELLE.

Ha! we make light of that, indeed!

DON JUAN.

Madame —

DONNA ELVIRE.

Enough! I will not hear more; I blame myself for having listened too long. It is a cowardly thing to let a man explain our shame to us; a noble heart should take its course at the first word. Think not that I shall here give way to wailings and reproaches. No, my

wrath will not exhale itself in empty words; its force is all reserved for vengeance. I tell you again, that Heaven will punish you, treacherous man, for the wrong you are now committing: but if there is naught in Heaven that you fear, remember the anger of an outraged woman and fear that.

---

## SCENE FOURTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

SGANARELLE, *aside*

Oh! if remorse would only seize him.

DON JUAN, *after a moment's reflection.*

Come, let us attend to the execution of our amorous enterprise.

SGANARELLE, *aside.*

Ah! what an abominable master I am forced to serve.

END OF FIRST ACT.

## Act Second

*The stage represents a country scene, near  
the sea*



## SCENE FIRST

CHARLOTTE, PIERROT

CHARLOTTE.

HEY, Pierrot, 't was mighty lucky you came  
to our dance.

PIERROT.

I'll take my oath of that! There was n't the  
thickness of a pin 'twixt them and death; they  
came as near as near being drowned, both of 'em.

CHARLOTTE.

Was it that squall this morning that tipped  
'em into the sea?

PIERROT.

Ah, ça, Charlotte, you listen, and I'll tell  
you straight what happened, for, as t' other  
says, I was the first to see 'em, I see 'em first.  
Well, 't was this way: I and that big Lucas,

him and me, we was on the beach, fooling with lumps of sand, and flinging 'em at our heads — you know how that big Lucas loves to fool, and I too, sometimes. Well, fooling along, since fooling there was, I saw something ever so far off squirming like in the water, and it seemed to be coming our way in jumps. I looked and looked, and then, all of a sudden, I did n't see anything at all. "Hey, Lucas," I said, said I, "I think there's men swimming over there." "Pshaw," says he, "you've been burying the cat and you don't see straight." "Nonsense," says I, "I see straight, and I tell you they are men." "They ain't," he says; "you've got the dazzles." "Will you bet," I says to him, "that I hain't got the dazzles," says I, "and that them's not two men swimming straight here?" says I. "*Morbleu!*" he says to me, "I'll bet they ain't." On that I says, "Will you bet ten sous upon it?" "I'm willing," says he, "and to prove it, there's the money." I ain't, myself, neither a fool nor a giddy-pate, but I plumped down bravely four bits o' coined money, and five sous in doubles, as bold, hang it, as if I'd swallowed a glass o' wine; for I'm a venturesome one, I am, and I do things with a dash. But, all the same, I knowed what I was about, and 't was he

that was the ninny. Why! we had no sooner bet than there were the two men, as plain to be seen as anything, making signs to us to go out and get them; but I tell you, I picked up the stakes first. "Come, Lucas," says I, "don't you see they're calling? let's go quick and save 'em." "No," says he, "they made me lose my wager." Well, to cut it short, I give him such a sarmon that we both put out in the boat, and dragged 'em out o' the water, and took 'em home, and put 'em near the fire, and they stripped themselves naked to get their things dry, and then came two more of the party, who thought nobody was saved but themselves, and then Mathurine came along, and one of 'em made eyes at her. There, Charlotte, now that's just what happened.

CHARLOTTE.

Didn't you say, Pierrot, that one of them was better-looking than the rest?

PIERROT.

Yes, that's the master; he must be some big, big fellow, for he has got gold all over his coat from top to bottom, and them as waits on him are gentlemen too. But, oh, my! fine as



my lord is, he 'd 'a' been drowned as sure as fate  
if I had n't been there.

CHARLOTTE.

Just think o' that!

PIERROT.

Yes, I say, without us, he 'd have ate his last  
beans.

CHARLOTTE.

Is he still naked in your house, Pierrot?

PIERROT.

Na, na! they 'd all dressed themselves before  
I came away. My! I never saw such clothing.  
What things round their bodies them court gen-  
tlemen stick on! I 'd be lost in 'em, for my  
part; and lost I was in amazement at just look-  
ing at 'em. Say, Charlotte, they've got hair  
that don't grow on their heads, and they take  
it on and off like my woollen cap. And they've  
shirts with such monstrous big sleeves that  
you an' I could get into one of 'em. 'Stead o'  
breeches, they wear a sort of apron that's as  
wide — oh! as wide as from here to Easter; and  
'stead o' doublet they 've got little spencers that  
dor't reach lower than the pit o' the stomach.

Round their necks they wear great stiff handkerchiefs with four long ends hanging down in front; and they 've got frills at the ends of their arms, and big loops of gold lace round their legs, and ribbons, my! such ribbons! it's like a fair; even their shoes are all tied up with 'em,—and, indeed, the shoes themselves are made so queer I know I'd break my neck if I put 'em on.

CHARLOTTE.

My stars! I want to go and see all that, Pierrot.

PIERROT.

Oh! stop, Charlotte, listen. I've got something more to say to you.

CHARLOTTE.

Well, say on; what is it?

PIERROT.

You see, Charlotte, I must, as t' other says, pour out my heart. I love you, and you know it; and I'm for being married together, but, hang me, if I'm quite satisfied with you.

CHARLOTTE.

Why not? What's the matter now?

PIERROT.

The matter is that you hurt my feelings, there!

CHARLOTTE.

How, pray?

PIERROT.

Because you don't love me.

CHARLOTTE.

Ha! ha! ha! is that all?

PIERROT.

Yes, that's all, but it's quite enough.

CHARLOTTE.

Heavens! Pierrot, how dull you are; you are always saying the same thing.

PIERROT.

I'm always saying the same thing because it always is the same thing; if it was n't always the same thing I should n't be always telling you the same thing.

CHARLOTTE.

But what is it you want? say, what do you want?

PIERROT.

Thunder and lightning! I want you to love me.

CHARLOTTE.

Don't I love you?

PIERROT.

No, you don't love me, and yet I do all I can to make you. I buy you ribbons from the peddlers without complaining; I break my neck to get you starlings out of a nest; I hire fiddlers to come and play to you on your birthday; but for all that I'm butting my head against a wall. Come, don't you see it's neither good nor honest not to love folks when they love us?

CHARLOTTE.

But goodness! I do love you.

PIERROT.

Oh! ah! call that loving!

CHARLOTTE.

What else do you want?

PIERROT.

I want you to do as people do when they love the right way.

CHARLOTTE.

Don't I love you the right way?

PIERROT.

No: when people love the right way they do lots of little tricks to those they love with their whole hearts. Look at that fat Thomasine, how she dotes on young Robain. She is always hanging round him, teasing him; she never gives him a moment's peace; it's either a nip or a thump as he goes by; and the other day as he was sitting on a stool, what does she do but knock it from under him, and there he was, sprawling on the floor. Yah! that's the way people do when they love. But you, you never say a word to me; you sit there like a log o' wood, and I might pass you a hundred times and you'd never bestir yourself so much as to give me even a tap. Thunder and lightning! I say it isn't right, — your're too cold for a man.

CHARLOTTE.

Well, how can I help it? It's my nature, and I can't be made over again.

PIERROT.

Nature indeed! If one loves a person one can't help showing some signs of it.

CHARLOTTE.

Well, I love you as much as I can love; and if you are not satisfied with that you'd better go and love somebody else.

PIERROT.

There! that's not what I want. Hang it! if you loved me would you say that?

CHARLOTTE.

Why do you come and pester me in this way?

PIERROT.

Goodness! what harm have I done you? I only asked for a little love.

CHARLOTTE.

Well, let things be as they are, and don't press me so. Perhaps it will come, all of a sudden, before I know it.

PIERROT.

Shake hands, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE, *giving her hand.*

Well, there!

PIERROT.

Will you promise that you'll try to love me better?



CHARLOTTE.

I'll do all I can; but love has got to come of itself — Pierrot, is that your monsieur?

PIERROT.

Yes, that's him.

CHARLOTTE.

Goodness! how nice he looks; 't would have been a pity indeed if he 'd been drowned.

PIERROT.

I'll be back presently; I must go and get a mug of something to set me up after the work I've done.



#### SCENE SECOND

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE; CHARLOTTE *in the background*

DON JUAN.

We have missed our stroke, Sganarelle; that unlooked for squall upset our project as well as our boat. But, to tell the truth, the peasant-girl we have just left repairs the loss. I find a charm about her which quite consoles me for the ill-luck of our adventure. This heart, I am determined, shall not escape me. Already

I have put into it an inclination not to force me to sigh too long for happiness.

SGANARELLE.

Monsieur, I must say you amaze me. Hardly have we escaped from the peril of death when, instead of rendering thanks to Heaven for the mercy it has shown, you set to work at once to draw down its wrath by your accustomed follies, your amours and — (*Don Juan makes threatening signs to him.*) Hush, rascal that you are; you don't know what you're saying; your master knows what he's about.

DON JUAN, *seeing Charlotte.*

Ah, ha! Sganarelle, here's another peasant-girl; where does she come from? Did you ever see anything prettier? Don't you think, tell me, don't you think she is prettier than the other?

SGANARELLE.

Assuredly. (*Aside*) Another game!

DON JUAN, *to Charlotte.*

How happens it, my beauty, that I meet you thus agreeably? What! in these country places, among these rocks and trees, are persons to be met with formed as you are?

*about girl peasant Charlotte*

CHARLOTTE.

So you see, monsieur.

DON JUAN.

Do you belong to that village?

CHARLOTTE.

Yes, monsieur.

DON JUAN.

And you live there?

CHARLOTTE.

Yes, monsieur.

DON JUAN.

You are named — ?

CHARLOTTE.

Charlotte, at your service.

DON JUAN.

Oh! the pretty creature, how piercing her eyes!

CHARLOTTE.

Monsieur, you make me quite ashamed.

DON JUAN.

Ah! feel no shame in hearing of your charms.  
Sganarelle, what say you? Could anything be

seen more pleasing? Turn round a little, if you please. Ah! what a pretty waist! Lift up your head a trifle, I entreat you; what a dainty face! Open your eyes completely. Oh! they are beautiful! And let me see your teeth, I beg of you. How lovable they are, how tempting are those lips! I am delighted, truly, for never have I seen a sweeter person.

CHARLOTTE.

Monsieur, you are pleased to say so; but I don't know whether you may n't be laughing at me.

DON JUAN.

I, laughing at you? God forbid. I like you far too much for that. I speak from the bottom of my heart.

CHARLOTTE.

If that is so, I'm very much obliged to you.

DON JUAN.

No, you are not obliged to me for what I say; it is to your great beauty that you owe it.

CHARLOTTE.

Monsieur, all that is too fine talk for me; I've not the wit to answer it.

DON JUAN.

Sganarelle, look at her hands!

CHARLOTTE.

Oh, monsieur, fie! they are as black as I don't know what.

DON JUAN.

How can you say so? They are the prettiest in the world. Allow me to kiss them.

CHARLOTTE.

Monsieur, you do me too much honor. If I'd known of this before, I'd have washed them well with bran.

DON JUAN.

Tell me, my lovely Charlotte, are you married?

CHARLOTTE.

No, monsieur; but I shall be soon to Pierrot, son of our neighbor Simonette.

DON JUAN.

What! a girl like you the wife of a common peasant? No, no! 't would be profaning all that beauty. You were not born to spend your life in a village. You deserve a better fortune,

and Heaven, which knows this well, has led me here expressly to prevent this marriage and to do justice to your charms. Yes, *beauteous Charlotte*, I love you with all my heart; and it rests with you to let me take you from this wretched village and place you in the station where you should be. This love is sudden, no doubt, but what of that? 't is the effect of your great beauty. A man is forced to love you in a few moments as much as he would love another in six months.

CHARLOTTE.

But, *monsieur*, I don't know what to do when you talk so. What you tell me makes me glad, and I'd give all the world to believe you if I could. But I've been told we *must n't ever trust a gentleman*; they say that you great lords at court are wheedlers, who only want to wrong a girl.

DON JUAN.

But I am not a man of that kind.

SGANARELLE, *aside*.

Oh! is n't he?

CHARLOTTE.

But *monsieur*, don't you see, there ain't no pleasure in letting one's self be wronged. I'm a



poor peasant girl, 'tis true, but I've honor to recommend me, and I'd rather die than see myself dishonored.

DON JUAN.

Have I the heart to do so wicked a thing as to wrong a girl like you? No, no! my conscience would not let me. I love you, Charlotte, in all honor; and, to show you that I speak the truth, I tell you now I have no other intention than to marry you. Can you ask greater proof? I am ready to do so when you will, and I take this man to witness the promise I now make to you.

SGANARELLE.

No, fear nothing; he'll marry you — as often as you wish.

DON JUAN.

Ah! Charlotte, I see you do not trust me yet. You do me wrong to judge of me by others. If there be deceivers in the world who only seek to wrong a girl, I am not one of them; and you ought not to cast these doubts on the sincerity of my word. Besides, your beauty is a guarantee for all. A woman made like you ought to feel safe from all such fears; you have

not the air, believe me, of a girl who could be wronged. As for myself, I here declare that I would stab me to the heart a thousand times sooner than have the faintest thought of treachery to you.

CHARLOTTE.

Oh, dear! I don't know whether you say true or not; but you make a girl believe you.

DON JUAN.

By believing me you only do me justice. I here repeat the promise I have made. Will you accept it? Will you consent to be my wife?

CHARLOTTE.

Yes, provided that my aunt is willing.

DON JUAN.

Take my hand, Charlotte, since you agree to what I ask.

CHARLOTTE.

But monsieur, you won't deceive me, will you? You surely have a conscience, and you see with what good faith I trust you.

DON JUAN.

What! have you further doubts of my sincerity? Do you wish me to take some fearful oath? that Heaven should —

CHARLOTTE.

No, no, don't swear, for I believe you.

DON JUAN.

Then give me a little kiss to prove it.

CHARLOTTE.

Oh! monsieur, wait till we are married, and then I'll kiss you — as much as ever you want.

DON JUAN.

Well, well, my pretty Charlotte, I'll agree to all. But let me take your hand and with a thousand kisses express the joy I feel.



SCENE THIRD

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, PIERROT, CHARLOTTE

PIERROT, *pushing Don Juan as he kisses  
Charlotte's hand.*

Stop, stop, monsieur; quiet, if you please.  
You're too hot; you'll get a pleurisy.

DON JUAN, *pushing Pierrot roughly.*

What brings this insolent fellow here?

PIERROT, *placing himself between Charlotte and Don Juan.*

I tell you you can't fondle our sweethearts in these parts.

DON JUAN, *pushing Pierrot again.*

Ha! what a clamor!

PIERROT.

Thunder and lightning! you've no business to be pushing folks like that.

CHARLOTTE, *taking Pierrot by the arm.*

Let him do as he likes, Pierrot.

PIERROT.

What! I! let him do as he likes? No, I won't, not I!

DON JUAN.

Ha!

PIERROT.

Yah! because you're a monsieur is that any reason why you should come and fondle our wives under our very noses? Go and fondle your own.

DON JUAN.

Ho!

PIERROT

Ho! (*Don Juan slaps him in the face.*)  
Thunder! don't strike me. (*Another blow.*)  
Heavens and earth! (*Another blow.*) Yah! I  
say you have n't any right to strike folks; is that  
how you reward a man for saving your life?

CHARLOTTE.

Pierrot, don't get angry.

PIERROT.

I shall get angry; and you're a jade, you are,  
to let him fondle you.

CHARLOTTE.

Oh! Pierrot, it is n't what you think. Mon-  
sieur wants to marry me; you should n't give  
way to such tantrums.

PIERROT.

What! ain't you pledged to me?

CHARLOTTE.

That's no matter, Pierrot. If you love me  
ought n't you to be very glad that I'm to be  
madame?

PIERROT.

Heavens and earth, no! I'd rather see you  
dead than belonging to another.

CHARLOTTE.

Now, now, Pierrot; don't put yourself in such a way. If I'm madame, I can help you to earn money; you shall bring cheese and butter to our house.

PIERROT.

I'll never bring one pound, if you pay me double for it. Is that what you believe he means? God! if I'd known this sooner, I'd have taken good care not to pull him from the sea; I'd have cracked his head for him with an oar.

DON JUAN, *coming up to Pierrot and striking him.*

What's that you say?

PIERROT, *getting behind Charlotte.*

Thunder! I'm not afraid of nobody.

DON JUAN, *passing round Charlotte to Pierrot.*

Wait a minute!

PIERROT, *going to Charlotte's other side.*  
I don't care that for you!

DON JUAN, *running after him.*  
We'll see if you don't!



PIERROT, *getting behind Charlotte again.*

I've seen others like you.

DON JUAN.

Halt!

SGANARELLE.

Hey! monsieur, let the poor wretch alone; you'll be sorry for beating him. (*Placing himself between Pierrot and Don Juan.*) Listen to me, poor boy; go away, and don't say anything more to him.

PIERROT, *passing in front of Sganarelle, and looking fiercely at Don Juan.*

I will say more to him!

DON JUAN, *lifting his hand to strike.*

Ha! I'll teach you! (*Pierrot lowers his head and the blow falls on Sganarelle.*)

SGANARELLE, *looking at Pierrot.*

Hang that booby!

DON JUAN, *to Sganarelle.*

Well paid for your charity!

PIERROT.

Yah! I'll go and tell her aunt about these goings-on.

## SCENE FOURTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, CHARLOTTE

DON JUAN, *to Charlotte.*

At last I shall be the happiest of men; I would not change my happiness for all the treasures in the world, and —

---

## SCENE FIFTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, MATHURINE, CHARLOTTE

SGANARELLE, *catching sight of Mathurine.*

Oh! ah!

MATHURINE, *to Don Juan.*

Monsieur, what are you doing there with Charlotte? Are you making love to her, I'd like to know?

DON JUAN, *low to Mathurine.*

No. On the contrary, 't is she who is urging her desire to be my wife; but I tell her I'm engaged to you.

CHARLOTTE, *to Don Juan.*

What does that Mathurine want with you?



MATHURINE, to Don Juan. *Monsieur,*  
*what are you doing there with Charlotte?*

DON JUAN, Act II., Sc. v.  
VOL. IV., Page 230

STUDY READING.

One Year, *Williamson's Grammar*.

Two Years, *in Chambers*.

We have a staff of the highest of men, it would not be unusual to suppose for all the members of the faculty, and —

STUDY READING.

One Year, *Williamson's Grammar*, *Williamson's*

*Grammar*, *Williamson's Grammar*, *Williamson's*

*Grammar*, *Williamson's Grammar*, *Williamson's*

*Grammar*, *Williamson's Grammar*, *Williamson's*

*Grammar*, *Williamson's Grammar*, *Williamson's*

*Grammar*, *Williamson's Grammar*, *Williamson's*

*Grammar*, *Williamson's Grammar*, *Williamson's*

One Year, *Williamson's Grammar*.

We have the highest of men, it would not be unusual to suppose for all the members of the faculty, and —

STUDY READING.

One Year, *Williamson's Grammar*, *Williamson's*







DON JUAN, *low to Charlotte.*

She is jealous because I am talking to you; she wishes me to marry her, but I tell her it is you I want.

MATHURINE.

What's all this, Charlotte?

DON JUAN, *low to Mathurine.*

All you can say is useless; she has taken it into her head.

CHARLOTTE.

How's this, Mathurine?

DON JUAN, *low to Charlotte.*

'Tis in vain for you to talk to her; you will never disabuse her of the fancy.

MATHURINE.

Is it —

DON JUAN, *low to Mathurine.*

'Tis impossible to make her listen to reason.

CHARLOTTE.

I'd like —

DON JUAN, *low to Charlotte.*

She is obstinate as all the devils.

MATHURINE.

But —

DON JUAN, *low to Mathurine.*

Don't talk to her; she's crazy.

CHARLOTTE.

I think —

DON JUAN, *low to Charlotte.*

Let her be, let her be; she's out of her head.

MATHURINE.

No, no, I want to speak to her.

CHARLOTTE.

I wish to hear what she has to say.

MATHURINE.

What's all —

DON JUAN, *low to Mathurine.*

I'll wager she will tell you that I've promised to marry her.

CHARLOTTE.

I —

DON JUAN, *low to Charlotte.*

I'll bet you she'll insist that I've given her my word to take her for my wife.

MATHURINE.

Holà ! Charlotte, 'tain't right to spoil other folks' market.

CHARLOTTE.

'Tain't decent, Mathurine, to be jealous because monsieur talks to me.

MATHURINE.

Monsieur saw me first.

CHARLOTTE.

If he saw you first he saw me second, and he's promised to marry me.

DON JUAN, *low to Mathurine.*

What did I tell you ?

MATHURINE, *to Charlotte.*

Ask your pardon, but it's me and not you he has promised to marry.

DON JUAN, *low to Charlotte.*

Did I not guess right ?

CHARLOTTE, *to Mathurine.*

'Tis me, I tell you.

MATHURINE.

You're fooling ; again I say 't is me.

CHARLOTTE.

Well, here he is to speak for himself; he'll say I'm right.

MATHURINE.

Yes, here he is to give me the lie if I don't speak the truth.

CHARLOTTE.

Monsieur, have you promised to marry her?

DON JUAN, *low to Charlotte.*

You are making fun of me.

MATHURINE.

Monsieur, is it true that you told her you'd be her husband?

DON JUAN, *low to Mathurine.*

How can you think so?

CHARLOTTE.

You'll see that he stands by me.

DON JUAN, *low to Charlotte.*

Let her do what she likes.

MATHURINE.

You're witness that he backs me up.

DON JUAN, *low to Mathurine.*

Let her say what she pleases.

CHARLOTTE.

No, no, we must know the truth.

MATHURINE.

No, we must have it proved.

CHARLOTTE.

Yes, Mathurine, I want monsieur to say out plain that you are on a fool's errand.

MATHURINE.

Yes, Charlotte, I want monsieur to put your nose out of joint.

CHARLOTTE.

Monsieur, settle this quarrel, if you please.

MATHURINE.

Help us to agree, monsieur.

CHARLOTTE, *to Mathurine.*

Now you'll see.

MATHURINE, *to Charlotte.*

You'll see for yourself.

CHARLOTTE, *to Don Juan.*

Speak.

MATHURINE, *to Don Juan.*

Say.

DON JUAN.

What am I to say? You both declare that I have promised to take you for my wife. Don't each of you know the truth without requiring me to explain it? Why do you oblige me to make these repetitions? Isn't she to whom I made the promise able to laugh within herself at what the other says? Ought she therefore to be so troubled, provided I fulfil my promise? All such discussions can't advance matters. We must act, not talk; results are more convincing than words. Therefore, that is the only way by which I can make you agree; when I marry it will be seen which of you has my heart. (*Low to Mathurine*) Let her believe as she pleases. (*Low to Charlotte*) Let her flatter herself if she likes. (*Low to Mathurine*) I adore you. (*Low to Charlotte*) I am all yours. (*Low to Mathurine*) All faces are ugly to me compared with yours. (*Low to Charlotte*) I cannot endure any other woman now that I know you. (*Aloud*) I have an order to give; but I will return to you in a few moments. [*Exit.*



## SCENE SIXTH

CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE

CHARLOTTE, *to Mathurine.*

I'm the one he loves.

MATHURINE, *to Charlotte.*

'Tis me he means to marry.

SGANARELLE.

Ah! my poor girls! I have pity for your innocence; I cannot bear to see you rushing to your misery. Believe me, both of you, don't trust the things he tells you. Stay in your village.

---

## SCENE SEVENTH

DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE

DON JUAN, *at the back.*

I'd like to know why Sganarelle did not follow me.

SGANARELLE.

My master is a deceiver, who intends to dishonor you as he has dishonored so many others. He marries wherever he goes, and —

(*seeing Don Juan*) No, I say, it is false, no matter who told you; my master is not a deceiver; he has no intention of dishonoring you; he has never dishonored others — ah! here he is; ask him yourselves.

DON JUAN, *looking at Sganarelle suspiciously.*

What is all this?

SGANARELLE.

Monsieur, as the world is full of malicious persons, I wanted to get beforehand with them; and I was saying that if any one spoke ill of you these young women were not to believe it, and they ought to tell such persons that they lie.

DON JUAN.

Sganarelle!

SGANARELLE, *to Charlotte and Mathurine.*

Yes, monsieur is a man of honor; I'll warrant him such.

DON JUAN.

Hum!

*Sganarelle! ce sont des impertinents*

FIVE  
SCENE EIGHTH

DON JUAN, LA RAMÉE, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE,  
SGANARELLE

LA RAMÉE, *low to Don Juan.*

Monsieur, I have come to warn you that there is danger for you in these parts.

DON JUAN.

How so?

LA RAMÉE.

Twelve men on horseback are in search of you; they will arrive here presently. I don't know by what means they have traced you, but I heard this news from a peasant whom they questioned and to whom they described you. The matter is pressing; and the sooner you can get away from here, the better.

---

## SCENE NINTH

DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE

DON JUAN, *to Charlotte and Mathurine.*

A pressing matter forces me to leave this place at once; but I beg you to remember the promise I have made, and to believe that you shall have news of me before to-morrow night.

## SCENE TENTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON JUAN.

As the numbers are not equal I am forced to use strategy, and escape the ill-luck which seems to be in search of me. Sganarelle must wear my clothes, and —

SGANARELLE.

Monsieur! you're not in earnest? What! compel me to be killed by wearing your clothes, and —

DON JUAN.

Come! quick! 't is an honor I do you. Lucky is the valet who has the glory of dying for his master.

SGANARELLE.

Thank you for such an honor! (*Alone.*) O Heaven! since death I risk, have mercy upon me, and let me not be taken for another man.

END OF SECOND ACT.

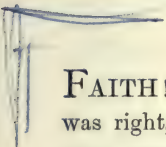
## Act Third

*The stage represents a forest.*

## SCENE FIRST

DON JUAN, *in the dress of a countryman*; SGANARELLE,  
*in the dress of a doctor*

SGANARELLE.



FAITH! monsieur, won't you admit that I was right, and that here we are both disguised most uncommonly well? Your first idea was not at all a good one. This disguise conceals us both far better than what you meant to do.

DON JUAN.

You are well disguised, at any rate. Where did you unearth that absurd apparel?

SGANARELLE.

Ha! is n't it? 'T is the suit of an old doctor who left it in pawn at the place where I got it; and it cost me a pretty penny. But don't you see, monsieur, these clothes make me respected;

the men I meet bow to me, and some of 'em have consulted me as a skilful doctor.

DON JUAN.

Pooh!

SGANARELLE.

Yes; five or six peasants and peasant-women who saw me pass came and asked my advice on their various diseases.

DON JUAN.

And you answered that you knew nothing about them?

SGANARELLE.

I? Not a bit of it! I endeavored to sustain the honor of my cloth. I advised them about their ailments and prescribed for all.

DON JUAN.

What remedies did you prescribe?

SGANARELLE.

Faith! monsieur, I took the first that came into my head; I prescribed at a venture. 'T would be a pretty thing if all my patients got well, and came and thanked me!



DON JUAN.

Why not? Why shouldn't you have the same privilege as other doctors? They've no more to do with the cure of their patients than you had; their whole art is a sham. They don't do anything to earn the glory of their lucky cures. You can profit, as they do, by the soundness of your patient's constitution, and attribute to your remedies the recovery that comes by favor of chance and the forces of nature.

SGANARELLE.

So you're an unbeliever in medicine too, are you, monsieur?

DON JUAN.

It is one of the greatest shams of mankind.

SGANARELLE.

You don't believe in senna and rhubarb and antimony wine?

DON JUAN.

What do you expect me to believe about them?

SGANARELLE.

You have a very unbelieving soul, monsieur. Antimony wine, for some time past, has made a

great commotion everywhere. Its miracles have converted the most incredulous minds. It is n't three weeks since I saw with my own eyes, I, who now speak to you, its wonderful effect.

DON JUAN.

What was that?

SGANARELLE.

A man was at death's door and dying for a week; no one knew what to do for him; all remedies had failed; at last they thought of trying this emetic wine —

DON JUAN.

And he recovered, did he?

SGANARELLE.

No, he died.

DON JUAN.

Wonderful effect!

SGANARELLE.

He had been dying for six whole days, but could n't die, and it killed him on the spot. Was ever anything more efficacious?

DON JUAN.

You are right.

SGANARELLE.

But let's drop medicine, in which you don't believe, and talk of other things. These learned clothes awaken my mind, and I feel moved to argue with you; you know you have allowed me to make arguments; it is only remonstrances that you forbid.

DON JUAN.

Go on, then.

SGANARELLE.

I'd like to know your inmost thoughts. Is it possible that you really don't believe in heaven?

DON JUAN.

Let that alone.

SGANARELLE.

Which means you don't. And hell?

DON JUAN.

Pooh!

SGANARELLE.

Which means the same. And, if you please, the devil?

DON JUAN.

Tut, tut.

SGANARELLE.

As little. Do you believe in another life?

Doesn't believe  
in heaven or  
hell, he does  
not believe in

DON JUAN.

Ha! ha! ha!

SGANARELLE.

Here's a man I shall have some trouble to convert. But tell me, what do you think of the Surly Monk, hey?<sup>1</sup>

DON JUAN.

A plague on such nonsense!

SGANARELLE.

Now *that* I can't endure! for there's nothing more certain sure than the Surly Monk, I'll be hanged if there is. But after all, we must believe something in this world. What do you believe in?

DON JUAN.

What do I believe in?

SGANARELLE.

Yes.

DON JUAN.

I believe that two and two make four, Sganarelle, and four and four make eight.

<sup>1</sup> A popular phantom, who walked at night, and struck people.

*Credo libertin  
aristocrate*

## SGANARELLE.

A fine belief! fine articles of faith, upon my word! Your religion, as far as I can see, is mere arithmetic. What strange follies do get into the heads of men! the more they learn, the less their wisdom seems. As for me, monsieur, I have n't studied like you, thank God! no one can boast of having ever taught me anything; but, with my little sense, and my little judgment, I see things clearer than books can tell them; and I know very well that this world we are now looking at is no mushroom that sprang up in a single night. I'd like to ask you now, who made those trees, these rocks, this earth, and the heaven above them? Did all that make itself? Now here are you — did you make yourself yourself? Did n't it require your father to beget you? Can you see all these wonders of which the machine of man is composed, without admiring how each part works in with the other parts? these nerves, these bones, these veins, these arteries, these — this heart, this liver, and all the other ingredients which are in us, and which — Oh, Lord! why don't you interrupt me? How can I argue, if I'm not contradicted? You are hold-

ing your tongue on purpose, out of pure malice, just to hear me talk.

DON JUAN.

I am waiting till you have finished your argument.

SGANARELLE.

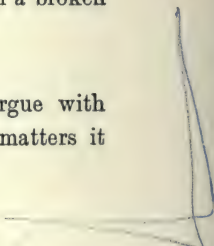
My argument is, that — no matter what you may say — that there is something wonderful in man which all the learned men in the world cannot explain. Is n't it wonderful that I am here; and that I have something in my head which thinks a hundred different things every minute, and can make my body do whatever it chooses? See! I wish to clap my hands, shrug my shoulders, raise my eyes to heaven, bend my head, move my feet, go to the right, go to the left, forward, back, turn round — (*In turning round he tumbles down*).

DON JUAN.

Good! there's your argument with a broken nose.

SGANARELLE.

*Morbleu!* what a fool I am to argue with you. Believe what you like; what matters it to me if you are damned?





DON JUAN.

But all this arguing has made us, I fancy, lose our way. Call to that man I see down there, and ask him to put us in the road.

---

SCENE SECOND

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, A PAUPER

SGANARELLE.

Holà, man! Hi, friend, ho! A word with you, please. Show us the road that leads to the town.

PAUPER.

You have only to follow this road, messieurs, and turn to the right when you leave the wood. But I advise you to keep your eyes about you, for of late there have been robbers in these parts.

DON JUAN.

I'm much obliged to you, friend, and thank you with all my heart.

PAUPER.

Would you please help me, monsieur, with your alms.

DON JUAN.

Ah, ha! so your advice was not disinterested?

PAUPER.

I'm a poor man, monsieur, living in this wood alone these many years. I will not fail to pray to Heaven to grant you every good.

DON JUAN.

Pray Heaven to give you a new coat; don't trouble yourself about the good of others.

SGANARELLE.

You don't know monsieur, my good man; he believes in nothing except that two and two make four, and four and four make eight.

DON JUAN.

What is your occupation in this forest?

PAUPER.

I pray to God all day for the welfare of the prosperous persons who give me alms.

DON JUAN.

Then, of course, you must be comfortably off?

PAUPER.

Alas! monsieur, I'm in the greatest need.

DON JUAN.

Nonsense! a man who prays to Heaven all day long can't fail to be at ease in his affairs.

PAUPER.

Monsieur, I do assure you that most of the time I have n't bread to eat.

DON JUAN.

But that is strange; you certainly are ill-rewarded for your prayers. Ha! ha! I'll give a louis d'or provided you will curse and swear.

PAUPER.

Ah! monsieur, you would not wish me to commit a sin.

DON JUAN.

You have only to decide whether or not you choose to earn a louis d'or. See, here is one, which I will give you if you swear. Come, you must swear.

PAUPER.

Monsieur —

DON JUAN.

Unless you do, you cannot have it.

SGANARELLE.

Come, come; swear just a little; there's no harm in that.

DON JUAN.

Here, take it — take it, I tell you; but you must swear.

PAUPER.

No, monsieur; I'd rather die of hunger.

DON JUAN.

Well, well! I'll give it to you, for love of humanity.<sup>1</sup> (*Looking into the forest.*) But what do I see down there? One man attacked by three! The game's unequal; I can't allow so cowardly a wrong. (*Takes his sword in hand and runs to the rescue.*)

---

SCENE THIRD

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

My master is a madman to rush into perils that don't seek him. But, bless me! his help has done the work; the pair of them have put the three to flight.

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that the word *humanité* was not in common use when Molière lived.

## SCENE FOURTH

DON JUAN, DON CARLOS; SGANARELLE *at the back*

DON CARLOS, *putting up his sword.*

You see, by the flight of those robbers, how great was the support you gave me. Permit me, monsieur, to thank you for so generous an action, and —

DON JUAN.

I did nothing, monsieur, that you would not have done for me. Our personal honor is involved in such a scene; the action of those scoundrels was so cowardly I should have shared their crime had I not gone to your assistance. But how happened it you fell into their hands?

DON CARLOS.

I was separated by chance from my brother and our suite; and while I was seeking to rejoin them the robbers met me. They killed my horse at their first onset, and, without your valor, they would have done the same to me.

DON JUAN.

Is it your intention to go toward the town?

DON CARLOS.

Yes, but not to enter it. We are obliged, my brother and myself, to remain in the country by one of those mortifying affairs which compel all noblemen to sacrifice themselves, and also their families, to the inflexibility of their honor. There are evils, not of their making, which may force them to quit, if not their life, at least their country. For this reason, I think the position of a nobleman unfortunate, inasmuch as no prudence, no uprightness of his own conduct can secure him from being forced by the laws of honor to suffer for the misconduct of others, and to see his life, his peace, his property dependent on the fancy of the first rash fellow who may offer him an insult for which an honest man must die.

DON JUAN.

But we have one advantage; those who so wantonly insult us have to run like risks, and pass their time as ill as we do. But is it an indiscretion to ask what this affair may be?

DON CARLOS.

The matter has reached a point at which there is no longer any secrecy; the insult once made



public, it is not for our honor to try to hide our shame; but rather to make our vengeance signal, and openly declare our full intentions. Therefore, monsieur, I shall not conceal from you that the offence we seek to punish is the seduction of a sister and her enticement from a convent by Don Juan Tenorio, son of Don Louis Tenorio. We have searched for him for several days, being informed by a valet that he had ridden out along this coast accompanied by four or five other horsemen. But all our efforts have proved useless; we have been unable to discover what has become of him.

DON JUAN.

Do you know him, monsieur, this Don Juan of whom you speak?

DON CARLOS.

No, I do not, myself; I have never seen him, my brother has described him to me. His reputation is bad; he is a man whose life —

DON JUAN.

Stop, monsieur, if you please. He is somewhat a friend of mine; 't would be a sort of baseness did I listen to any evil said of him.

DON CARLOS.

For your sake, monsieur, I will say none; the least that I can do for you who saved my life is to be silent in your presence about a man who is your friend, since I cannot say anything but ill of him. But, friend though you be to him, I venture to hope that you do not approve his present action, and that you will not think it strange we wish to be revenged upon him?

DON JUAN.

On the contrary, I should be glad to help you and spare you useless trouble. I am Don Juan's friend because I cannot help it; but it is not reasonable he should affront a noble family with impunity; and I will take upon myself to make him give you satisfaction.

DON CARLOS.

What satisfaction can be given for injuries like these?

DON JUAN.

All that your honor can desire. Do not trouble yourself to seek farther for Don Juan; I will engage to make him meet you at any time and place you please.

DON CARLOS.

That hope is very soothing, monsieur, to a wounded heart. But, after all that you have done for me, I should be grieved indeed were you not present at the meeting.

DON JUAN.

I am bound so closely to Don Juan that he could scarcely fight you unless I fought too. But, at any rate, I'll answer for him as for myself; you have only to say when and where you wish him to appear and give you satisfaction.

DON CARLOS.

My fate is hard! Must I owe my life to you who are Don Juan's friend?



SCENE FIFTH

DON ALONZO, DON CARLOS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON ALONZO, *speaking back to his servants.*

Water the horses and bring them after me. I'll walk a little way. (*Seeing Don Carlos and Don Juan.*) Heavens! what is this? Brother, why are you here with the man who is our mortal enemy?

DON CARLOS.

Our mortal enemy !

DON JUAN, *putting his hand on the hilt of his sword.*

Yes, I am Don Juan. Your advantage in numbers does not make me desirous of concealing my name.

DON ALONZO, *drawing his sword.*

Ah! traitor, you shall perish now, and —  
(*Sganarelle runs and hides himself.*)

DON CARLOS.

Brother! stop! I owe my life to this man; without the succor of his arm, I should have fallen victim to a band of robbers in the wood.

DON ALONZO.

And would you, for that consideration, thwart our vengeance? Whatever services are rendered by an enemy can have no merit which constrains our souls; and if we measure the obligation by the injury, your gratitude, my brother, is ridiculous. Since honor is more precious far than life itself, to owe our lives to those who rob us of that honor is, justly speaking, to owe nothing.

DON CARLOS.

I know the difference a nobleman should see between them, and gratitude for the succor given does not efface in me resentment for the injury. But allow me to return to him the service that he did me; I pay him for the life I owe to him by a short delay of vengeance, and leave him free to enjoy its benefits for a certain time.

DON ALONZO.

No, no, you risk our vengeance by delay; the occasion now presented may never come again. Heaven offers it now; it is for us to profit by the gift. When honor is wounded mortally we should keep no terms with him who stabbed it; and if you feel repugnant to help me with your arm, at least retire and leave to me the glory of the punishment.

DON CARLOS.

For Heaven's sake, brother —

DON ALONZO.

All these appeals are vain, for he must die.

DON CARLOS.

Stop, brother, stop! I will not let his life be taken. I swear to Heaven I will here defend

it against I care not who; I'll make a rampart for him of the life he saved, and if you deal your blows on him you strike at me.

DON ALONZO.

What! do you take that traitor's part against me, and, far from sharing the transports of my wrath, do you show him kindness?

DON CARLOS.

Brother, moderation should be shown in so legitimate an action; do not avenge our honor with the rage you feel. Let us have a courage of which we are the master, — a valor that is not savage, that brings to bear the pure deliberations of our reason and not the impulsion of blind anger. I do not wish to remain a debtor to my enemy. I have an obligation toward him of which I must, before all else, acquit myself. Our vengeance, though deferred, will not be less impressive; on the contrary, it gains advantage; for this occasion when we might have taken it will only make it seem more just to other minds.

DON ALONZO.

Amazing weakness! fearful blindness this of risking all the interests of your honor for the foolish reason of a mere fancied obligation.



DON CARLOS.

No, brother, 'tis not that. If I commit a fault I will repair it. I take upon myself to vindicate our honor. I know to what it binds us; and this suspension of a day which gratitude demands will only quicken in me the energy to satisfy it. Don Juan, you see that I am scrupulous to return the good you did me: by this you may judge the rest, and know that I will bring an equal ardor in paying for insults as for benefits. I do not ask you to explain your feelings here; I give you time and liberty to think at leisure on the decision you have now to make. You know the greatness of your offence, and I make you judge, yourself, of the reparation that is due to us. There is one gentle means of satisfaction; others are violent and bloody. But, in any case, whatever choice you make, you have passed your word to give me satisfaction on Don Juan. Remember that, I beg of you; and be sure that from this moment I owe no duty but to my honor.

DON JUAN.

I have asked nothing of you; and I will keep my word.

DON CARLOS.

Come, brother; a moment's kindness does not lessen the sternness of our duty.



SCENE SIXTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON JUAN.

Holà! hey! come here, Sganarelle.

SGANARELLE, *coming out of the place where he was hiding.*

What did you say?

DON JUAN.

You rascal! So you hide when I am attacked?

GANARELLE.

Excuse me, monsieur, I was quite close by. These doctor's-clothes must act as purgatives; I might as well take medicine as put them on.

DON JUAN.

Plague take the saucy scamp! Cover your cowardice with a more decent veil. Do you know whose life it was I saved?

SGANARELLE.

I? no.

DON JUAN.

That of the brother of Donna Elvire.

SGANARELLE.

A —

DON JUAN.

A worthy man who acted worthily, and I am sorry to have a contest with him.

SGANARELLE.

But there's an easy way of settling that affair.

DON JUAN.

Yes; but my passion for his sister is burnt out. To bind myself in marriage does n't jump with my humor. I like liberty in love, as you know; I couldn't bring myself to immure my heart within four walls. I've told you scores of times my natural bent is to let myself go wherever sweet attraction calls me. My heart belongs to beauty, to all beauties; and they must take it turn by turn, and keep it while they can. But what is that splendid edifice I see among the trees?

SGANARELLE.

Do you not recognize it?

DON JUAN.

No, I don't.

SGANARELLE.

Hum! It is the tomb which the Commander was having built at the time you killed him.

DON JUAN.

Ah! true; you're right. I had forgotten it was on this road. People have told me marvels of the building, and also of the statue it contains of the Commander; I'd like to see it.

SGANARELLE.

Monsieur, don't go in there.

DON JUAN.

Why not?

SGANARELLE.

It is n't civil to go and see a man you killed.

DON JUAN.

On the contrary; it is a visit that I wish to pay him out of civility; he will receive it with good grace, if he's a gallant man. Come, we'll go in.

*(The tomb opens and the statue of the Commander is seen.)*

SGANARELLE.

Ah! how fine! what a handsome statue!  
Oh, the fine marble! the beautiful pillars!  
How splendid it all is! What do you think,  
monsieur?

DON JUAN.

I think the ambition of a dead man could no  
farther go. What I find remarkable is, that a  
man who spent his life in a comparatively sim-  
ple house should wish to have so magnificent a  
dwelling when he can't enjoy it.

SGANARELLE.

There 's the statue of the Commander.

DON JUAN.

*Parbleu!* 'tis good, with his Roman empe-  
ror's toga!

SGANARELLE.

Sure, monsieur, 't is well done. He looks as  
if he were alive and just about to speak. He 's  
casting glances at us, which would terrify me if I  
was alone; I think he is n't pleased at seeing us.

DON JUAN.

Then he 'd be wrong; and it would be a very  
poor reception of the honor I have done him.  
Ask him if he will come and sup with me.

Speak  
of the  
Commander  
that he  
K

SGANARELLE.

Supper is a thing of which he does n't stand in need, I fancy.

DON JUAN.

Ask him, I tell you.

SGANARELLE.

You are joking; I should look like a fool to go and speak to a statue.

DON JUAN.

Do as I tell you.

SGANARELLE.

What a whim! Seigneur Commander (*aside*) I laugh at my own folly, but it is all my master's doing. (*Aloud*) Seigneur Commander, my master, Don Juan, asks if you will do him the favor to come and sup with him. (*The statue bends its head.*) Ah-h!

DON JUAN.

What is it? What's the matter? Tell me. Why don't you answer?

SGANARELLE, *bending his head like the statue.*

The statue —



DON JUAN.

Well! what of it, you rogue?

SGANARELLE.

I tell you that the statue —

DON JUAN.

Well, the statue? I'll knock you down if you don't answer me.

SGANARELLE.

The statue made me a sign.

DON JUAN.

Hang the rascal!

SGANARELLE.

It made me a sign, I tell you; nothing was ever truer. Go and speak to him yourself and see. Perhaps —

DON JUAN.

Come here, you scamp, come here; I'll make your cowardice lay a finger on him. Take care now! Will the Seigneur Commander come and sup with me? (*The statue bends its head.*)

SGANARELLE.

I would n't touch it for a dozen pistoles.  
Well, monsieur?

DON JUAN.

Come, let's go.

SGANARELLE, *aside*.

Ha! here's your free-thinker who won't believe in anything!

END OF THIRD ACT.

## Act Fourth

*The stage represents Don Juan's apartment.*

## SCENE FIRST

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, RAGOTIN

DON JUAN, *to Sganarelle.*

HOWEVER that may be, we'll drop the subject. 'Tis a mere trifle anyway; we may have been deceived by some reflection, or the mist had blurred our sight.

SGANARELLE.

Ah! monsieur, don't try to deny what we saw with our own eyes. Nothing was ever more certain than that nod of his head. I make no doubt that Heaven, scandalized by your life, produced this miracle to convert you, and draw you from —

DON JUAN.

Now listen to me: if you torment me any longer with your foolish morality, if you say a

single other word about it, I'll call some one to bring me a beef sinew, and you shall be held by three or four others and severely flogged. Do you hear me?

SGANARELLE.

Yes, monsieur, very well indeed. You express yourself clearly. That's one good thing about you; you don't go round about a thing; you say it out with admirable distinctness.

DON JUAN.

Come, let me have my supper as soon as possible. A chair, you boy.



#### SCENE SECOND

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN

LA VIOLETTE.

Monsieur, here's your merchant, Monsieur Dimanche, who wants to speak to you.

SGANARELLE.

There now! that's the next thing, a crowd of duns! What has put it into that man's head to come and ask for money? And why didn't you tell him that monsieur was out?

LA VIOLETTE.

I've been telling him that for the last three-quarters of an hour; but he wouldn't believe it, and he sat down there in the antechamber to wait.

SGANARELLE.

Then let him wait, as long as he likes.

DON JUAN.

No; on the contrary, show him in. It is very poor policy to deny yourself to creditors. You should always pay them something; and I know the secret of sending them away satisfied without paying a doubloon.



SCENE THIRD

DON JUAN, MONSIEUR DIMANCHE, SGANARELLE,  
RAGOTIN

DON JUAN.

Ah! Monsieur Dimanche, come in; how delighted I am to see you. I am very much displeased with my servants for not letting you in at once. I gave orders that I should see no one; but, of course, they did not apply

to you ; you have a right to find my door always open to you.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur, I am very much obliged to you.

DON JUAN, *speaking to the valets.*

*Parbleu!* you rascals, I'll teach you to leave Monsieur Dimanche in the antechamber; I'll make you know people better than that.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur, it is of no consequence.

DON JUAN.

What! of no consequence to say that I am not at home to Monsieur Dimanche, to my best friend?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur, I humbly thank you. I came —

DON JUAN.

Quick! a chair for Monsieur Dimanche.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur, I am very well as I am.

DON JUAN.

No, no; I wish you to sit beside me.



MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

It is not necessary.

DON JUAN.

Take away that folding-stool, and bring an arm-chair.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur, you are jesting, and —

DON JUAN.

Not at all; I know what is due to you; I do not choose that any difference should be made between us.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur —

DON JUAN.

Come, sit down.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

It is not necessary, monsieur; I have only a word to say. I came —

DON JUAN.

Sit there, I say.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

No, monsieur, I am very well here. I came to —

DON JUAN.

I can't listen if you are not seated.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur, I do as you wish. I —

DON JUAN.

*Parbleu!* Monsieur Dimanche, I hope you are well.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Yes, monsieur, at your service. I have come —

DON JUAN.

You have a sound constitution, red lips, a rosy skin, and your eyes are bright.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

I would like —

DON JUAN.

How is Madame Dimanche, your wife?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Very well, monsieur, thank God!

DON JUAN.

She's a most worthy woman.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

She thanks you humbly, monsieur. I came—

DON JUAN.

And your little daughter Claudine, how is she?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Could n't be better.

DON JUAN.

Pretty little thing that she is! I love her with all my heart.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

You do her great honor, monsieur. I have—

DON JUAN.

And little Colin; does he still make a racket with his drum?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Yes, as usual, monsieur. I—

DON JUAN.

And your little dog Brusquet; does he growl as he used to do, and snap at the legs of those who come to see you?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

More than ever, monsieur, and we can't break him of it.

DON JUAN.

You must not be surprised that I ask news of all the family, for I take great interest in them.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

We are all infinitely obliged to you, monsieur.  
I —

DON JUAN, *putting out his hand*.

Then shake hands, Monsieur Dimanche. Are you really a friend of mine?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur, I am most respectfully yours.

DON JUAN.

*Parbleu!* I am your friend with all my heart.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

You do me too much honor. I —

DON JUAN.

There is nothing that I would not do for you.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Monsieur, you are too kind.

DON JUAN.

And without self-interest, I do assure you.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

I do not merit such favor, I am sure. But, monsieur —

DON JUAN.

Ah ça! Monsieur Dimanche, without ceremony, will you sup with me?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

No, monsieur, I must return home immediately. I —

DON JUAN, *rising and calling out.*

Here! quick! a torch to light Monsieur Dimanche; and four or five of you take muskets to escort him.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE, *also rising.*

Monsieur, it is not necessary; I can go alone. But —

*(Sganarelle takes away the chair.)*

DON JUAN.

What! go alone? I wish you to have an escort; I care too much for your safety. I am your friend, monsieur, and your debtor.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Ah ! monsieur —

DON JUAN.

That is a fact I never conceal ; I mention it to every one.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

If —

DON JUAN.

Shall I accompany you to the door ?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Oh ! monsieur, you are jesting ! Monsieur —

DON JUAN.

Embrace me. Again I beg you to remember that I am wholly yours, and that there is nothing in the world I would not do for you.

[*Exit.*]

---

SCENE FOURTH

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE, SGANARELLE

SGANARELLE.

You must admit that you have a friend in my master who loves you well.



## MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

True; he paid me such civility and so many compliments that I did n't know how to ask him for my money.

## SGANARELLE.

I assure you that all his household would do anything in the world for you. I wish some misfortune might happen to you, or some rascal might attack you with a stick, and then you'd see the manner in which —

## MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

I believe you. But, Sganarelle, I beg you to say a little word to him about my money.

## SGANARELLE.

Oh! don't be troubled about that; he'll pay you one of these days.

## MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

But you, Sganarelle, you owe me something yourself.

## SGANARELLE.

Fy! don't talk to me of that.

## MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

What! I —

SGANARELLE.

Don't I know what I owe you?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

Yes, but —

SGANARELLE.

Come, Monsieur Dimanche, I'm going to  
light you down.

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

But my money —

SGANARELLE, *taking Monsieur Dimanche by  
the arm.*

Are you joking?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

I want —

SGANARELLE, *dragging him along.*

Hey?

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

I expect —

SGANARELLE, *pushing him to the door.*

Nonsense!

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

But —

SGANARELLE, *still pushing him.*

Fy!

MONSIEUR DIMANCHE.

I—

SGANARELLE, *pushing him out.*

Fy! I tell you.

---

SCENE FIFTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE

LA VIOLETTE, *to Don Juan.*

Monsieur, here is your father.

DON JUAN.

Ha! what ill-luck! I only needed this to madden me.

---

SCENE SIXTH

DON LOUIS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON LOUIS.

I plainly see that I embarrass you, and you could well have spared my visit. To say the truth, we strangely incommode each other. If you are weary of seeing me, I am more weary still of your behavior. Alas! we little know

what we are doing when we will not leave to Heaven the choice of the things we need; when we think ourselves wiser than God himself, and importune him with our blind desires and ill-considered prayers. I longed for a son with unparalleled desire; I prayed for him ceaselessly, with unspeakable ardor; and this son whom I obtained by wearying Heaven is the grief and torment of my life, of which I thought he would have been the joy and consolation. How think you that I can view this mass of unworthy actions, the evil aspects of which can scarce be softened to the world,—this continual round of wicked deeds which may at any hour exhaust the forbearance of your sovereign, and have already outweighed with him the merits of my service, and the credit of my friends? Ah! how base a soul is yours! Do you not blush to deserve your noble birth so little? Have you the right to boast of it? What have you done in this world to deserve the name of nobleman? (Do you think that it suffices to bear the name and arms, and that to come of noble blood can be a glory to you while you live in infamy? No, no! high birth is nothing where virtue is not. We have no part in the glory of our ancestors unless we make ourselves resemble them.

The splendor of their actions cast upon our lives binds us to do them a like honor; to follow in the footsteps they have left, and not degenerate from their virtue if we wish to be considered their true descendants. But you, you come in vain from your forbears; they disavow you as being of their blood; and all the illustrious actions they have done are no advantage to you; on the contrary, their glory lights up your dishonor; it is a torch which shows to every eye your shameful deeds. Learn that a nobleman who leads a vicious life is an unnatural monster; that virtue is the first title of nobility; for I regard far less the name we sign than the acts we do; the son of a street porter, if he be virtuous, is more, in my eyes, than a monarch's son who lives like you.

DON JUAN.

Monsieur, if you would be seated you could talk at your ease.

DON LOUIS.

No, insolent man, I shall not sit down; nor shall I say another word; I see that all I say is lost upon your soul. But know, unworthy son, that your father's tenderness is at last ex-

hausted. I shall proceed to put a stop, and sooner than you think, to your licentiousness. I will invoke Heaven's anger on you, and by your punishment wash out the shame of having begot you.

---

## SCENE SEVENTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON JUAN, *addressing his father after he has gone out.*

Ha! die soon, and the sooner the better; 't is the best thing you can do. Every man should have his chance in this world; and it makes me furious to see fathers who live as long as sons.

SGANARELLE.

Ah! monsieur, you did wrong —

DON JUAN, *rising angrily.*

I did wrong?

SGANARELLE, *trembling.*

Monsieur —

DON JUAN.

I did wrong?



SGANARELLE.

Yes, monsieur, you did wrong to bear the things he said to you; you should have taken him by the shoulders and put him out. A father to come here and remonstrate with his son! — to tell him to reform his actions, to remember his birth, to lead the life of an honest man, and other such follies! A man like you ought not to bear it — you who know how to live. I admired your patience; and yet, if I'd been you, I'd have sent him to the right-about at once. (*Aside*) Oh! cursèd cringing, to what have you reduced me?

DON JUAN.

Why don't they serve my supper?



## SCENE EIGHTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, RAGOTIN

RAGOTIN.

Monsieur, a lady in a veil is here to see you.

DON JUAN.

Who can she be?

SGANARELLE.

You had better see her.

## SCENE NINTH

DONNA ELVIRE, *veiled*, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DONNA ELVIRE.

Be not surprised, Don Juan, to see me at this hour, and thus veiled. A pressing motive compels me to this visit. What I have to say allows of no delay. I do not come here now filled with the anger that I lately showed; you see me greatly changed from what I was this morning. This is no longer Donna Elvire who called down curses on your head; whose irritated soul cast threats that breathed of vengeance. Heaven has banished from that soul the unworthy anger that I felt for you, the convulsive transports of a criminal attachment, the shameful fury of a gross and earthly love; and it has placed within my heart a flame made pure from any taint of sense, a tenderness all holy, a love detached from earth, which has no thought of self, and takes this step for your sake only.

DON JUAN, *low to Sganarelle*.

What! are you weeping?

SGANARELLE.

Forgive me.

## DONNA ELVIRE.

This pure and perfect love has brought me here to give you Heaven's warning, and strive to save you from the abyss to which you are hastening. Yes, Don Juan, I know now the profligacy of your life; and Heaven, which has touched my heart and shown me the faultiness of my own behavior, has inspired me to come and tell you, in Heaven's name, that your sins have exhausted its mercy, that its wrath is about to fall upon you, but that you still have time to escape it by a swift repentance — although, alas, there is but one day left in which to save yourself from the most terrible of ills. For myself, I am no longer bound to you by earthly ties; I have recovered, thanks be to Heaven, from all my foolish dreams. I retire from the world, and I only ask for enough of life in which to expiate my fault, and, by austere repentance, win God's pardon for the blindness into which my unworthy passion plunged me. But in this retreat I should feel bitter grief if one whom I had cherished tenderly became a fatal mark of Heaven's justice; and it would be to me a joy unspeakable if I could bring you to escape the awful doom

that now awaits you. Don Juan, for God's sake, grant me, as a last favor, this tender consolation. Do not refuse me your salvation, which I ask with tears; and if your own well-being does not touch you, be moved by my distress, my prayers; spare me the cruel sorrow of knowing you condemned to everlasting woe.

SGANARELLE, *aside*.

Poor woman!

DONNA ELVIRE.

I loved you with excessive tenderness; nothing in all the world has been so dear to me as you; for you I turned from duty; I gave all to you; and the only recompense I ask is that you change your life and so escape your peril. Save yourself, I pray you, either for love of self, or love of me. Once more, Don Juan, I appeal to you with tears; and if the tears of one you used to love be not enough, I implore you by all that is more capable of touching you.

SGANARELLE, *aside, looking at Don Juan*.

Oh, tiger-heart!

DONNA ELVIRE.

After these words I leave you; I have said all I had to say.

DON JUAN.

Madame, it is late; I beg you to remain.  
My servants will lodge you for the night as  
best they can.

DONNA ELVIRE.

No, Don Juan, I cannot be detained.

DON JUAN.

Madame, you would do me a great pleasure,  
I assure you.

DONNA ELVIRE.

No, I say. Let us not lose our time in use-  
less talk. Allow me to go now, and make no  
effort to detain me; think only of how to profit  
by my warning.

---

SCENE TENTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON JUAN.

Do you know, I really felt a trifle of emotion  
for her. I found a charm in that odd whim;  
her careless dress, her languid air, her tears,  
stirred some last sparks of an extinguished  
fire.

SGANARELLE.

That means her words had no effect upon you.

DON JUAN.

But now, to supper!

SGANARELLE.

Good!



SCENE ELEVENTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN

DON JUAN, *seating himself at table.*

Nevertheless, Sganarelle, one has to think of mending one's ways, you know.

SGANARELLE.

Oh, ay!

DON JUAN.

Yes, faith, we must amend. Twenty or thirty years of this life, and then we'll begin to think about it.

SGANARELLE.

Oh-h!

DON JUAN.

What do you say to that?



SGANARELLE.

Nothing. Here's your supper. (*Takes a portion of one of the dishes as it is brought in and puts it in his mouth.*)

DON JUAN.

Why! it seems to me your cheek is swollen. What's the matter? Tell me. What have you got there?

SGANARELLE.

Nothing.

DON JUAN.

Let me see. *Parbleu!* it is a swelling in his cheek. Quick! a lancet, and let me open it. Poor fellow! he can't bear it; an abscess like that might choke him. See, how near it is to bursting — Oh, you rascal!

SGANARELLE.

Faith, monsieur, I only wished to know if the cook had salted or peppered that dish too much.

DON JUAN.

Well, sit down and eat. I want you as soon as I have supped. I should say that you were hungry, by what I see.

SGANARELLE, *sitting down to table.*

You may well say so, monsieur! I have n't had a mouthful since this morning. Take some of that; 't is excellent. (*Each time that Sganarelle puts something on his plate Ragotin takes the plate away when Sganarelle turns his head.*) Here, my plate, my plate! Gently, if you please, my little man; you are too clever at changing plates. And you, La Violette, learn to serve wine more promptly if you please.

(*While La Violette fills Sganarelle's glass, Ragotin takes away another plate.*)

DON JUAN, *listening.*

Who can be knocking at the door like that?

SGANARELLE.

Who the devil disturbs our supper now?

DON JUAN.

I want to sup in peace; let no one enter.

SGANARELLE.

I'll see to that; I'll go myself.

DON JUAN, *seeing Sganarelle return in fear.*

What is it? Who is there?

SGANARELLE, *bending his head like the statue.*

The — He 's there!

DON JUAN.

I'll see for myself — and show that nothing can perturb me. (*Goes toward the door.*)

SGANARELLE.

Ah! poor Sganarelle, where can you hide yourself?

---

SCENE TWELFTH

DON JUAN, THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDER,  
SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN

DON JUAN, *to the servants.*

A chair, and a knife and fork. Quick, there!  
(*Don Juan and the Statue sit at table. To Sganarelle*) Come, sit down.

SGANARELLE.

Monsieur, I am not hungry.

DON JUAN.

Sit down, I tell you. Now, fill up. To the health of the Commander! Drink, Sganarelle. Give him wine.

SGANARELLE.

Monsieur, I am not thirsty.

DON JUAN.

Drink! and sing your song to entertain the Commander.

SGANARELLE.

Monsieur, I am hoarse.

DON JUAN.

Never mind that. Go on. The rest of you (*to the valets*) accompany his voice.

THE STATUE.

Don Juan, enough. I invite you to sup with me to-morrow night. Have you the courage to do so?

DON JUAN.

Yes, I will come alone with Sganarelle.

SGANARELLE.

I thank you humbly ; but to-morrow is a fast-day with me.

DON JUAN, *to Sganarelle*.

Take that torch —

THE STATUE.

Lights are not needed when Heaven shows the way.

END OF FOURTH ACT.

*Killed a good  
man  
Liggett*

## Act Fifth

*The stage represents a country region*

---

SCENE FIRST

DON LOUIS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON LOUIS.

MY son! can it be possible that Heaven's mercy grants my prayer? Is what you tell me really true? Are you not deceiving me with some false hope? May I indeed feel confidence in the surprising news of your conversion?

DON JUAN.

Yes; you see me renouncing the error of my ways. I am no longer what I was last night; Heaven has worked a sudden change in me which will amaze all those who know me. It has touched my eyes and opened them. I now regard with horror the blindness in which I lived, and the criminal license of the life I led. I have gone over in my mind the abominations of that life, and I wonder that Heaven has borne with them so long, and has not rained



upon my head a score of times the blows of its just anger. I see the mercy that it shows in sparing me the punishment of my sins; and I intend to profit by it as I should. I will show to the world a sudden change of life; I will repair the scandal of my former actions, and strive to obtain from Heaven a full remission of my sins. For this I mean to labor; and I beg you, father, to assist me yourself in choosing a companion who may be my guide, and lead me safely in the path I am now about to enter.

DON LOUIS.

Ah! my son, how readily a father's love can be recalled; how quickly the offences of a son vanish at the first syllable of repentance. Already I forget the pain you caused me; all is effaced by what you now have said. I am beside myself, I own; my tears are tears of joy; all my desires are satisfied, and I have nothing more to ask of Heaven. Embrace me, oh, my son! Persist, I pray you, in this worthy course. Now I must go and carry to your mother the joyful news, to share with her the tender transports of my happiness, and render thanks to Heaven for the sacred resolution it has deigned to inspire in your soul.

## SCENE SECOND

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

SGANARELLE.

Ah! monsieur, what joy I feel in seeing you converted! I have watched for it so long! and now, thanks be to Heaven! my wishes are accomplished.

DON JUAN.

The deuced fool!

SGANARELLE.

Fool?

DON JUAN.

So you took what I said just now for genuine coin! and you think my heart is in keeping with my words?

SGANARELLE.

What! is it not? — you are not converted? you — (*Aside*) Oh, what a man! what a man! what a man!

DON JUAN.

No, no, there is no change in me; my sentiments are still the same.

SGANARELLE.

Then you don't surrender your unbelief to that amazing marvel of a walking, talking statue?

DON JUAN.

There is something in all that, no doubt, which I do not understand; but, whatever it may be, it is not capable of convincing my mind or of shaking my soul. When I said that I intended to reform my conduct and take to an exemplary life, it was solely to carry out a scheme I have in view, a useful stratagem, a necessary sham, to which I shall subject myself out of pure policy,—solely to please a father whose support I need to shield me before the world in this and other annoying matters which may happen to me. I am glad, Sganarelle, to take you into my confidence, and have a witness to my inner mind, and the real motives which will prompt my actions.

SGANARELLE.

What! you believe in nothing, and yet you expect to set yourself up in the eyes of others as a good man?

DON JUAN.

Why not? There are plenty of men like me who do that very thing; who use the same mask solely to deceive the world.

SGANARELLE.

Ah, what a man! what a man!

DON JUAN.

Why, there's no longer any shame in that. Hypocrisy is the vice of the day; and fashionable vices pass as virtues. The character of a good man is the best of all characters to assume. Nowadays the profession of hypocrite has wonderful advantages. 'T is an art, the humbug of which is invariably respected. Though it may be discovered no one dares to say a word against it. All the other vices of men are liable to censure, everybody is at liberty to attack them openly; but hypocrisy is a privileged vice, which shuts all mouths and peacefully enjoys a sovereign impunity. Humbug binds men together in a close bond. Whoso strikes one, brings all the others down upon him; and those who act sincerely, good men who are really earnest in the matter, they, I tell you, are the dupes of the others; they tumble headlong

into the snare of the humbugs and blindly uphold the mimics of their own actions. How many men think you that I know who by this stratagem have cleverly patched over the debauchery of their youth,—men who shield their mode of life with the mantle of religion, and in that honored garment obtain the right to be the wickedest men on earth? Their vices may be visible, the world may know these men for what they are; but, for all that, their credit is not lessened; a lowered head, a deprecating sigh, a roll or two of the eyes will set right all they do. This is the comfortable shelter to which I now betake myself for safety. I don't intend to give up pleasant habits; but I will take good care to hide them, and to divert myself less openly; and if, by chance, I am discovered, I shall, without lifting a finger, see the whole posse take my part in everything. That's the true way of living as we choose with impunity. I shall make myself a censor of the actions of others; I shall judge men harshly; and have no good opinion of any but myself. Whoever meddles with me, be it ever so slightly, I will not forgive him; I shall keep — but quietly in my heart — an everlasting hatred to him. I'll make myself the avenger

@ least the  
see D. J. for  
who he is?  
not what  
he should be



of Heaven, and under that convenient pretext I'll pursue my enemies; I'll accuse them of impiety, I'll let loose upon them reckless zealots who, with no knowledge of the actual truth, will howl in public at them, pelt them with insults, and damn them openly in Heaven's name. That's how we ought to profit by human weakness and wisely use the vices of our time.

SGANARELLE.

Heavens! what talk is this? Nothing was lacking to you but hypocrisy, and here's the climax of all your abominations. Monsieur, this last horror drives me beside myself; I can no longer be silent. Do what you will with me; strike me, knock me down, kill me if you choose, but I must speak out what is in my heart; I must, as a faithful valet, say what I ought. Monsieur, hear me: the pitcher goes once too often to the well; and, as an author whose name I can't remember says, man is in this world like the bird upon the bough; the bough is attached to the tree; whoso is attached to the tree follows good precepts; good precepts are better than fine words; fine words belong to courts; at courts are courtiers; courtiers follow fashions; fashions come from fancy; fancy is a



faculty of the soul; the soul is what gives life; life ends in death; death makes us think of Heaven; Heaven is above the earth; the earth is not the sea; the sea is subject to storms; storms toss vessels; vessels need pilots; pilots have prudence; prudence belongs not to youth; youth owes obedience to age; age loves riches; riches make rich men; rich men are not paupers; paupers are necessitous; necessity knows no law; and he who lives without law is a brute beast; consequently, you'll be damned by all the devils.

DON JUAN.

Fine reasoning!

SGANARELLE.

If you don't give in after that, so much the worse for you.

---

SCENE THIRD

DON CARLOS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

DON CARLOS.

Don Juan, this meeting is opportune. I am glad to speak to you here, rather than in your own house, to ask your decision. You know that this matter is now in my hands; in your

presence I took it upon myself to settle the affair. As for me, I will not conceal that I earnestly desire it may end peacefully; and there is nothing that I will not do to bring your mind to take that course and publicly bestow upon my sister the name of wife.

DON JUAN, *in a hypocritical tone.*

Alas! I would, with all my heart, give you the satisfaction that you wish. But Heaven itself opposes it. God has inspired within my soul a desire to change my life; I have no other thought than to quit forever all earthly attachments, to strip myself at once of worldly vanities, and redeem, by strict austerity of life, the criminal debauchery to which the ardor of my blind youth led me.

DON CARLOS.

That desire, Don Juan, does not conflict with what I say. The presence of a legitimate wife will help to carry out those laudable intentions, which Heaven indeed inspires.

DON JUAN.

Alas, not so. It is your sister's wish. She has herself resolved to quit the world. Heaven taught us both at the same moment.

DON CARLOS.

Her withdrawal to a convent will not satisfy us; 't would be imputed to your scorn, shown both to her and to her family. Our honor demands that she shall live with you as your wife before the world.

*She must live with you as wife*

DON JUAN.

I assure you that it cannot be. For myself, I earnestly desired it. I have, this very day, implored Heaven's counsel on it. But, even as I asked, I heard a voice, bidding me think no longer of your sister, for with her I could never save my soul.

DON CARLOS.

Do you imagine, Don Juan, that you can blind me by such excuses?

DON JUAN.

I obey the voice of Heaven.

DON CARLOS.

What! you expect to satisfy us with such talk as that?

DON JUAN.

It is the will of Heaven.

DON CARLOS.

You took my sister from a convent intending to abandon her?

DON JUAN.

Heaven ordains it.

DON CARLOS.

We will never suffer that stain to remain upon our family.

DON JUAN.

Blame Heaven.

DON CARLOS.

Ha! always Heaven!

DON JUAN.

For Heaven so wills it.

DON CARLOS.

Enough, Don Juan; now I understand you. It is not here that I will fight; the place does not permit it; but before long, I'll meet you elsewhere.

DON JUAN.

Do as you will. You know my courage is not wanting; I can use my sword when need-

ful. I shall presently pass through that lonely street which leads to the great convent. I here declare it is not I who seek to fight, may God forbid the very thought! but, if you attack me, we shall see what happens.

DON CARLOS.

Yes, we shall see.



#### SCENE FOURTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE

SGANARELLE.

Monsieur! the tone you take is devilish! This is worse than all the rest; I'd like you better as you were before. I always hoped for your salvation; now I despair of it. I thought that Heaven, having borne with you so long, would never let it come to these last horrors.

DON JUAN.

Pooh! Heaven is not so exacting as you think; if every time a man —

## SCENE FIFTH

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, A SPECTRE, *in the form of a veiled woman*

SGANARELLE, *catching sight of the Spectre.*

Ah! monsieur, Heaven is speaking to you; see! it gives you warning.

DON JUAN.

If Heaven intends to give me a warning, it must speak out clearly to make me hear it.

THE SPECTRE.

Don Juan has but one moment in which to profit by Heaven's mercy. If he does not now repent, he is lost eternally.

SGANARELLE.

Do you hear that, monsieur?

DON JUAN.

Who dares to use such language? I think I know the voice.

SGANARELLE.

Ah! monsieur, 't is a ghost; I know it by its gait.



DON JUAN.

Ghost, phantom, or devil, I will see what it is. (*The Spectre changes into a figure of Time bearing his scythe.*)

SGANARELLE.

Oh, heavens! monsieur, do you see that change of form?

DON JUAN.

Nothing is able to inspire me with fear; I'll prove by my sword whether it is a body or a ghost. (*The Spectre vanishes as Don Juan attempts to strike it.*)

SGANARELLE.

Oh! monsieur, yield to these many warnings; fling yourself quickly into repentance.

DON JUAN.

No; it shall never be said, whatever happens, that I was capable of repentance. Come, follow me.

## SCENE SIXTH

THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDER, DON JUAN,  
SGANARELLE

THE STATUE.

Halt, Don Juan. You passed your word last night to sup with me.

DON JUAN.

Yes; where must I go?

THE STATUE.

Give me your hand.

DON JUAN.

There it is.

THE STATUE.

Don Juan, hardening of the heart in sin brings fatal death; Heaven's mercy scorned calls down its thunderbolts.

DON JUAN.

Oh Heaven! what is this? invisible fire burns me; I can no more! my body is a furnace! Ah-h!

*(A thunderbolt falls with great noise and lightning upon Don Juan. The earth opens and swallows him up; flames belch forth from the abyss into which he sinks.)*

## SCENE SEVENTH

SGANARELLE, *alone*.

Oh, my wages! my wages! Here, by his death every one is satisfied — offended Heaven, violated law, seduced young women, dishonored families, outraged parents, injured wives, distracted husbands, all, they are all content; and I, only I am luckless. Oh, my wages! my wages! my wages!

END OF DON JUAN.





# LES FÂCHEUX

(BORES)



Comedy-Ballet

IN THREE ACTS

## PERSONAGES



|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>DAMIS . . . . .</p> <p>ORPHISE.</p> <p>ÉRASTE . . . . .</p> <p>ALCIDOR</p> <p>LISANDRE</p> <p>ALCANDRE</p> <p>ALCIPPE</p> <p>ORANTE</p> <p>CLIMÈNE</p> <p>DORANTE</p> <p>CARITIDÈS</p> <p>ORMIN</p> <p>FILINTE</p> | } | <p><i>Guardian to Orphise.</i></p> <p><i>In love with Orphise.</i></p> <p><i>Bores.</i></p> |
|---|---|---|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>LA MONTAGNE . . .</p> <p>L'ÉPINE . . . . .</p> <p>LA RIVIÈRE AND TWO COMPANIONS.</p> | <p><i>Valet to Éraсте.</i></p> <p><i>Valet to Damis.</i></p> |
|---|--|

The Scene is in Paris, chiefly in a Grove.





# LES FÂCHEUX

Act First

---

SCENE FIRST

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

ÉRASTE.

UNDER what star was I born, good God! to be so plagued by bores? Fate thrusts them on me everywhere; and daily I am forced to see new species. But none have ever equalled the bore I met to-day; I thought I never should get rid of him. A hundred times I cursed the innocent wish that seized me, after dinner, to go to a theatre; where, thinking to amuse myself, I was miserably punished for my sins. I must tell you all about it, for I still fume with anger. I went to the theatre in the humor to listen to a play which had been much praised to me.

The actors began; everybody was silent, when, in a noisy extravagant manner, a man with monstrous breeches bustled in, calling out "Holà, there, ho! a seat, immediately!" The din he made disturbed the audience and one of the finest scenes was spoilt. "Good heavens!" said I, "will Frenchmen, often as they are corrected for it, never learn to behave like people of decent sense? Must we act out in public our most salient faults, confirming, by the exhibit of fools, what our neighbors say of us?" Whereupon I shrugged my shoulders, and the actors attempted to go on. But no, the man made more noise still in getting to his seat. He crossed the theatre with heavy steps (although he could have been well-seated at the sides), planted his chair before the very centre of the foremost row, defying the audience, as it were, by his broad back, and hiding the actors from three-fourths of them. On this a murmur rose, which would have shamed another man; but he, fixed in his own intentions, took no notice of it, and would have sat just where he plumped himself if, for my misery, he had not spied me. "Ha, marquis," he called out, taking the seat beside me. "How do you do? let me embrace you." The color flew into

my face to think the people present should see I even knew the inconsiderate fellow. In fact, I hardly knew him; but he is one of those who force acquaintance on us; whose familiar treatment and even kisses we are compelled to bear. No sooner was he seated than he asked a hundred frivolous questions, raising his voice louder than the actors on the stage. All present cursed him in their hearts, and I, to stop his talk, said that I wished to listen to the comedy. On which he said: "What! you have n't seen it, marquis? God damn me, I find it rather droll, and I'm no fool; I know the laws by which such work is done, for Corneille comes to read to me what he writes." And thereupon he gave me a summary of the play, scene after scene, forestalling what was coming; even the verses (which he knew by heart) he recited in loud tones before the actors spoke them. In vain I tried to shield myself; he pushed his chance. At last, toward the end, he rose before the play concluded; for persons of high style, who wish to do the proper thing, are careful never to listen to the conclusion of a piece. I rendered thanks to Heaven and thought that though the comedy was over, my penance was over too. But, as if fate refused to let me

off so cheaply, again he fastened on me with fresh talk; told me his exploits, his uncommon virtues, talked of his horses, of his luck in love, the favor he was in at court, offering to serve me there with all his heart. I thanked him with a nod, pondering the while how I could best escape; but he, seeing me make a movement that way, cried out: "Let's go; the modish people are all going." Once outside, he fastened himself upon me more than ever. "Marquis," he said, "suppose we drive to the Cours and show my calèche. 'T is very stylish; several dukes and peers have ordered my carriage builder to make theirs like it." I, to be civil and yet escape him, said I had guests to supper. "Ah, *parbleu!*" he cried, "then I'll be one of them, being a friend of yours. I'll give up supping with the maréchal to whom I was engaged." "The fare is such," I said, "that I should scarcely dare invite a man of your condition." "Oh," he replied, "'t is only for the pleasure of conversing with you that I'll come; I'm weary of great banquets, I assure you." "But," I said, "if you are expected elsewhere, it will give offence." "Oh, nonsense, marquis; I and the maréchal know each other well. Besides, I shall enjoy myself

much more with you." Inwardly I raged, with sad and baffled soul, to see the poor success of my excuses; and I was wondering to what other I could have recourse and so escape a torture that was killing me, when a carriage, most superbly built and laden with lacqueys front and back, drew up with a great dash in front of us, and a young man in fine array jumped out. My bore and he ran to each other's arms, jostling the passers-by without a thought; and while the pair were thus precipitated into a loud convulsion of civility, I gently slipped away without a word; but groaning still at my long martyrdom, and cursing the bore whose obstinate zeal about himself has made me miss a rendezvous to which I was bidden here.

LA MONTAGNE.

Worries are mixed with pleasures in this life. Nothing happens, monsieur, precisely as we want it. Heaven wills that each man here below should have his bores; mankind could not be happy otherwise.

ÉRASTE.

Well, of all my bores, the greatest bore is Damis, guardian of her I love; he who prevents the happiness for which she lets me hope, and,

in spite of her kind feelings, forbids her to see me. I greatly fear the appointed hour is past. I was to find my Orphise in this path.

LA MONTAGNE.

The hour for rendezvous is usually extendible; it is not contracted to the limit of a minute.

ÉRASTE.

True; but I tremble; my love is such it makes the merest nothing into a crime against her.

LA MONTAGNE.

If this perfect love, of which you give such proof, makes a great crime of nothing toward her, what her heart feels for you makes nothing of your crime.

ÉRASTE.

But tell me, seriously, do you think she loves me?

LA MONTAGNE.

Do you still doubt a love that has been pledged?

ÉRASTE.

Ah! it is difficult, under the circumstances, for a heart so passionate to feel full assurance. It fears to flatter itself; and what it wishes



most, that it can least believe. But let us seek to find my beauteous lady.

LA MONTAGNE.

Monsieur, your neck-bands have parted here in front.

ÉRASTE.

Oh! never mind.

LA MONTAGNE.

Let me arrange them, if you please.

ÉRASTE.

Ouf! you strangle me; leave them as they are.

LA MONTAGNE.

Please to let me comb your hair.

ÉRASTE.

Preposterous nonsense! There, you've nearly combed an ear off.

LA MONTAGNE.

Your breeches —

ÉRASTE.

Let my breeches alone; you are making too much fuss.

LA MONTAGNE.

They are all creased.

ÉRASTE.

I like them so.

LA MONTAGNE.

Do let me, by special favor, brush that hat;  
it is all over dust.

ÉRASTE.

Brush it, then ! — since I can't prevent you.

LA MONTAGNE.

You surely would n't wear it as it is ?

ÉRASTE.

Good gracious ! do make haste.

LA MONTAGNE.

Conscientiously.

ÉRASTE, *after waiting some time.*

That 's enough.

LA MONTAGNE.

Have patience.

ÉRASTE.

He wears me out !

LA MONTAGNE.

Where can you have been to get so dusty ?

ÉRASTE.

Are you going to keep possession of that hat forever?

LA MONTAGNE.

It's done.

ÉRASTE.

Then give it me.

LA MONTAGNE, *lets fall the hat.*

Hi!

ÉRASTE.

There! now 't is in the dust! I shall never get off! May a fever catch you!

LA MONTAGNE.

Allow me — two strokes — just to wipe it off.

ÉRASTE.

No, I won't. The devil take all valets whom we have to put up with! — fellows who bore one to death simply because they want to be thought indispensable.

## SCENE SECOND

ORPHISE, ALCIDOR, ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE. *Orphise crosses the stage at the back, Alcidor conducting her*

ÉRASTE.

Surely I see Orphise? Yes, it is she. Where can she be going so hurriedly? and who is that man who leads her by the hand?

---

## SCENE THIRD

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

ÉRASTE.

Oh, heavens! see me in this very place and pass as if she knew me not! What can I believe? What say you? Speak!

LA MONTAGNE.

Monsieur, I say nothing, for fear of boring you.

ÉRASTE.

And so you do if you say nothing in this extremity of cruel martyrdom. Make some answer to my stricken heart. What must I conclude? Speak; what think you? Tell me your sentiments.

LA MONTAGNE.

Monsieur, I 'd rather be silent; I don't want to seem to think myself indispensable.

ÉRASTE.

A plague on the saucy fellow! Off with you; follow them; see where they go. Don't leave them for a minute.

LA MONTAGNE, *going and then returning.*

Am I to follow at a distance?

ÉRASTE.

Yes.

LA MONTAGNE, *going, then returning.*

Without their seeing me? or shall I let them know I am sent after them?

ÉRASTE.

You had better let them know that you follow them by my orders.

LA MONTAGNE, *going, then returning.*

Shall I find you here when I get back?

ÉRASTE.

The devil take you, man! To my thinking, you 're the greatest bore on earth!

## SCENE FOURTH

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

Ah! what distress I feel. 'T would have been far better if I had really missed this fatal rendezvous. I believed I should find everything propitious; instead of which my eyes find tortures for my heart.

---

## SCENE FIFTH

LISANDRE, ÉRASTE

LISANDRE.

My eyes caught sight of you among these trees, dear marquis; and I have come at once to sing you a little air I have composed for a minuet, which pleases all the experts at court, and to which more than twenty persons have set verses.<sup>1</sup> I have, as you know, property, high birth, a tolerable office, and I cut quite a figure in France, but I would n't for all I am worth, have missed composing this air, which I will

<sup>1</sup> In the French, *courante* (*ancienne danse, très grave.* — Littré). There is no English word for it; unless *couranto*, a piece of music in triple time, indicates a waltz. Minuet seems to suit the description better. — Tr.



now sing to you. (*Preludes with his voice.*)  
La, la, hem, hem. Listen attentively, I beg  
of you. (*Sings his minuet.*) Isn't it beautiful?

ÉRASTE.

Ah!

LISANDRE.

The end is pretty. (*Sings the end over three  
or four times.*) What do you think of it?

ÉRASTE.

Very beautiful, certainly.

LISANDRE.

The steps that I have arranged for it are not  
less pleasing; the first figure, above all, has  
marvellous grace. (*He sings, and talks, and  
dances at once; then, taking Éraсте by the  
hand, he makes him dance the female part.*)  
See, the man passes this way; the woman, that;  
next, together. Then they part, and the woman  
goes there. Now, don't you perceive the little  
feint in all that? See this step, that *chassé*  
pursuing the beauty, *dos-à-dos*, face to face,  
still pressing closer. (*At the end*) Well, what  
do you think of it, marquis?

ÉRASTE.

The steps are elegant.

LISANDRE.

For my part, I despise dancing-masters.

ÉRASTE.

So I see.

LISANDRE.

But you said the steps —

ÉRASTE.

Are truly surpassing.

LISANDRE.

Would you like me, as a friend, to teach them to you?

ÉRASTE.

Well, for the present, I have certain engagements.

LISANDRE.

Very good, then; whenever you like. If I had that score of new words with me we could read them over together, and select the ones we thought most beautiful.

ÉRASTE.

Another time.

LISANDRE.

Adieu; that dear Baptiste has n't heard my minuet. I'll go round there now and find him.

He and I have great sympathy in airs, and I'll get him to make the parts for me.<sup>1</sup> (*Departs singing.*)

---

## SCENE SIXTH

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

Heavens! must the rank of such fools — rank which is held to cover everything! — must it compel us to endure all this, and even lower ourselves to actually applaud their conceited folly?

---

## SCENE SEVENTH

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

LA MONTAGNE.

Monsieur, Orphise is alone, and she is coming this way.

ÉRASTE.

Ah! what agitation fills my soul! I love that inhuman beauty, when reason tells me I should hate her.

<sup>1</sup> Jean Baptiste Lulli; born in Florence; a favorite of Louis XIV.; obtained the license of the Académie-Royale de Musique in 1672; became the creator of French opera.

LA MONTAGNE.

Monsieur, your reason does n't know what it wants, nor the power of a mistress upon the heart. Although there may be causes for just anger, a loved one with a word puts things to rights.

ÉRASTE.

Alas! and I admit it; the sight of her already turns anger to respect.



## SCENE EIGHTH

ORPHISE, ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

ORPHISE.

Your aspect, to my mind, seems none too cheerful. Is it my presence, Éraste, that distresses you. What is it? What troubles you? and what unpleasant thought at sight of me makes you sigh thus?

ÉRASTE.

Alas! how can you ask me, cruel one, why mortal sadness fills my heart? Could any but a malicious spirit feign to ignore what you have done to me? He in whose company you lately passed me —

ORPHISE, *laughing*.

So that 's the cause of this emotion?

ÉRASTE.

Insult my misery, inhuman heart? Ha! it ill becomes you to ridicule my sorrow, and to abuse the weakness which you know, alas! is in my soul for you.

ORPHISE.

Yes, but laugh I must, for indeed you are too silly to fume in this way. The man you speak of, far from pleasing me, is a most dreadful bore whom I have just got rid of, — one of those tiresome officious fools who never let us be alone in these sweet groves, but come, the moment that we enter, and with fulsome words offer to conduct us; such men anger me. I made a feint of going home to conceal my purpose; he led me to my carriage, and there I promptly shook him off; I drove away, and then, to find you, re-entered by the other gate.

ÉRASTE.

Can I put faith, Orphise, in what you say? and is your heart sincere?

ORPHISE.

How very good you are to say such things when I am taking pains to justify myself against your frivolous complaints. I am too simple still; my foolish kindness —

ÉRASTE.

Ah! be not angry, my harsh love. I wish to believe you blindly; being beneath your yoke, I will put faith in all you have the charity to say to me. Deceive if you choose a hapless lover, I will trust you to my grave. Ill-treat my love, deny me yours, display before my eyes the triumph of another — yes, I will suffer all for your bewitching charms, and, though I die of it, I will not complain.

ORPHISE.

If feelings such as these are in your breast, I, on my part, will —



## SCENE NINTH

ALCANDRE, ORPHISE, ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

ALCANDRE.

Marquis, one word. (*To Orphise*) Madame, forgive, I pray you, if I am indiscreet in asking to speak with him alone. (*Orphise retires.*)

---

## SCENE TENTH

ALCANDRE, ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

ALCANDRE.

I regret to trouble you, marquis, but a man has just attacked me to my face; and I have come to ask you to go to him at once on my behalf and call him out, that I may not seem backward. You know how joyfully I would repay you in the same coin in such a case.

ÉRASTE, *after a pause before speaking.*

I have no desire to play the braggart, but everybody knows I was a soldier before I came to court. I served for fourteen years; and I may say, I think, that I came out of them with honor. I need not fear that the refusal of my

arm to aid your duel will be imputed to any baseness.<sup>1</sup> Duels place men in false positions. Our King is not a figure-headed monarch; he makes himself obeyed by the greatest in the State; I think his acts are worthy of a potentate. When it is necessary that I should serve him, I have the will to do so; but displease him I will not; I make his orders my highest law. Find some other second, who is willing to disobey him. I speak to you with perfect frankness, vicomte, and in all things else I am your humble servant. Adieu.

---

## SCENE ELEVENTH

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

ÉRASTE.

To the devil with these pestering fellows!  
Where did my loved one go?

LA MONTAGNE.

I don't know.

ÉRASTE.

Go, search for her, search everywhere; I will  
await you here.

<sup>1</sup> Louis XVI. was issuing at this time stringent edicts against duelling.

## BALLET.

*Players at bowls with mallets call to him to get out of their way, and force him to retire.*

*Presently, after their game is finished, he returns, but inquisitive people come about him and stare at him, and drive him away again.*

END OF FIRST ACT.

**Act Second****SCENE FIRST**

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

HAVE they all gone, those bores? On all sides it rains bores, I think. I fly them, but I meet them everywhere; and to complete my martyrdom I cannot find my love. The storm is quickly over, and the gay world still lingers in the grove. I would that Heaven, among its many gifts on us bestowed, would add the mercy of driving away these wearying fools! The sun is going down; how strange it is my valet has not returned.

**SCENE SECOND**

ALCIPPE, ÉRASTE

ALCIPPE.

Good-evening.

ÉRASTE, *aside.*

Again my meeting with my love disturbed!

## ALCIPPE.

Console me, marquis, for a strange loss at piquet which I made last night to that Saint-Bauvain, to whom I had given no less than fifteen points and the lead. Such frightful luck! it overwhelms me; 't is enough to send all players to the devil! a blow to make one hang one's self in public! I needed but a deuce, and he a pique. I dealt; he took six and asked to deal again. I, seeing that I had everything in hand, declined. I held the king of clubs (see this ill-luck!), ace, king, knave, eight and ten of hearts, and threw away, from policy, the king and queen of diamonds, and the queen and ten of spades. The queen of hearts then fell to me, which with my five, gave me a major quint; but my adversary with the ace, much to his own surprise, got a sezieme out of his low diamonds. I had discarded, as I told you, my king and queen, but as he wanted pique, I played fearlessly, thinking to make at least two single points. With his seven diamonds he had four spades, and flinging down the latter, he put me in the dilemma of not knowing which to keep of my two aces. I threw down the ace of hearts, wisely, as I thought; but he got rid of

four of his spades at once, and then with a six of hearts, capotted me! I could n't, out of vexation, say a single word. *Morbleu!* I'd like you to explain to me such dreadful luck; though to be sure, as you did not see it, it is scarcely credible.

ÉRASTE.

'Tis at play we see the greatest strokes of fate.

ALCIPPE.

*Parbleu!* you shall judge yourself if I made any blunder, and whether it is unreasonable that I be furious. I've brought the score of the game expressly to explain it. See! this is my hand, just as I told you; and here —

ÉRASTE.

But I understand it all from your description. I see the justice of your provocation. I must now leave you for a certain matter. Adieu; console yourself for this misfortune.

ALCIPPE.

I? never! I shall always have this dreadful luck upon my mind. 'Tis worse for my judgment than a stroke of lightning. I want to let



the whole earth see it — and I will, too. (*Goes away, but returns to say*) A six of hearts! two points!

ÉRASTE.

What sort of world is this we live in?  
Wherever we turn, fools, — nothing but fools!



SCENE THIRD

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

ÉRASTE.

Ah! how you have tried my just impatience.

LA MONTAGNE.

Monsieur, I could n't have made more diligence.

ÉRASTE.

Well, at any rate, have you brought me news?

LA MONTAGNE.

I have; the lady who is your destiny sends  
you by me a special message.

ÉRASTE.

What is it? My heart is wearying for it.  
Speak.

LA MONTAGNE.

Do you wish me to repeat it verbally?

ÉRASTE.

Yes, quick!

LA MONTAGNE.

Monsieur, one moment, please; I ran so fast  
I am out of breath.

ÉRASTE.

Do you take pleasure in holding me in pain?

LA MONTAGNE.

As you desire to know at once the message I  
received from that most charming lady, I will tell  
you — Faith! without boasting of my zeal, I  
must tell you that I went a fine distance before  
I found her, and if —

ÉRASTE.

Damn your digressions!

LA MONTAGNE.

Ah! people should moderate their passions;  
Seneca says —

ÉRASTE.

Seneca is a fool in your mouth, for he does n't  
tell me what I want to know. Give me the  
message, quick!

LA MONTAGNE.

To gratify your wishes, Orphise — There 's  
a beetle in your hair.

ÉRASTE.

Let it alone.

LA MONTAGNE.

Orphise sends you word —

ÉRASTE.

Well? what?

LA MONTAGNE.

Guess.

ÉRASTE.

Know you that I am not joking?

LA MONTAGNE.

Her message is that you are to stay just where  
you are, and she will come to you ere long, when  
she is rid of certain country folk, who are to  
people of breeding most tiresome animals.

ÉRASTE.

Therefore I shall remain in the place she  
chose herself. But as her message points to  
certain leisure, leave me to meditate alone.  
(*La Montagne retires.*) While I await her

coming I 'll try to compose some verses on that air she likes so much. (*Walks up and down, pondering.*)

---

## SCENE FOURTH

ORANTE, CLIMÈNE ; ÉRASTE, *at the side, unseen by the others*

ORANTE.

Everybody will be of my opinion.

CLIMÈNE.

Do you think obstinacy can make you right ?

ORANTE.

I think my reasons are better than yours.

CLIMÈNE.

I wish there were some one present to hear us both.

ORANTE, *perceiving Éraste.*

I see a man down there who is no ignoramus. He shall decide our quarrel. Marquis, one word, I beg of you. Permit us to make you the judge of a dispute between us ; a discussion, which has greatly roused our feelings, as to what constitutes a perfect lover.

ÉRASTE.

Mesdames, that question is too difficult for me to settle. Find an abler judge.

ORANTE.

No, no; 't is useless nonsense to tell us that; your judgment is in great repute; we know that every one most justly thinks you —

ÉRASTE.

Oh! for mercy's sake —

ORANTE.

In short, you must consent to be our umpire; we will detain you only a few moments.

CLIMÈNE, *to Orante*.

You have chosen as our judge a man who will decide against you; for, if all I hear is true, monsieur will certainly give victory to my arguments.

ÉRASTE, *aside*.

Would that my traitor of a valet could be inspired to invent some way to get me out of this!

ORANTE, *to Climène.*

For my part, I have heard too many proofs of his good judgment to fear he will decide against me. (*To Éraste*) Well, this grand debate in which we are so heated is to decide whether a lover should be jealous.

CLIMÈNE.

Or — to explain my thought and hers more clearly — which should please a woman most, a lover who is jealous, or a lover who is not.

ORANTE.

As for me, I say the last, beyond a doubt.

CLIMÈNE.

I say, in my opinion, undoubtedly the first.

ORANTE.

I think a woman's heart should give its suffrage to him who shows her most respect.

CLIMÈNE.

I say that if our liking must be openly proclaimed it should be for the lover who is most in love.



ORANTE.

Agreed; but the ardor of his soul is better shown by deep respect than jealous transports.

CLIMÈNE.

In my opinion, we love him all the more if he is jealous.

ORANTE.

Oh, fy! Climène, don't call men lovers when their love is made of hate; men who to show their homage and respect bore us to death by making scenes; suitors whose soul is black with jealousy; who turn our slightest actions into crime, subject our innocence to their blind folly and want an explanation of the merest glance. Lovers, indeed! who, if we seem oppressed by any grief, complain we do not like their presence; and if our eyes shine with some pleasure, declare their rivals are the cause of it. Such suitors, assuming that the fury of their passion gives them rights, seldom address us except to make a quarrel, presume to forbid to others all entrance to our hearts, and make themselves the tyrants of the women whose charms have mastered them. As for me, I say again I want a lover whom respect inspires; for his submission proves my empire over him.

## CLIMÈNE.

Oh, fy! don't talk to me of men being true lovers who show no violent emotion for us; luke-warm gallants! whose placid hearts composedly take things for granted, fear not to lose us, and let their passion go to sleep through too much confidence. Lovers! who live on good terms with their rivals and leave the field open to all pursuit. Such tranquil love excites my wrath; it is a cold love that is never jealous. I want a man to prove his passion by the suspicions of his soul, and give a signal sign of the esteem in which he holds me by instant jealousy. Women may pride themselves on such disquietude; and if, at times, he treats us rather roughly, the pleasure of seeing him, later, a suppliant at our knees begging for pardon, with tears and self-reproach for having grieved us, is charm enough to soothe our pain.

## ORANTE.

Well, if to win your love you want such violent emotions you can easily be gratified; I know a dozen men in Paris who, as they let us see, love to the point of fighting.

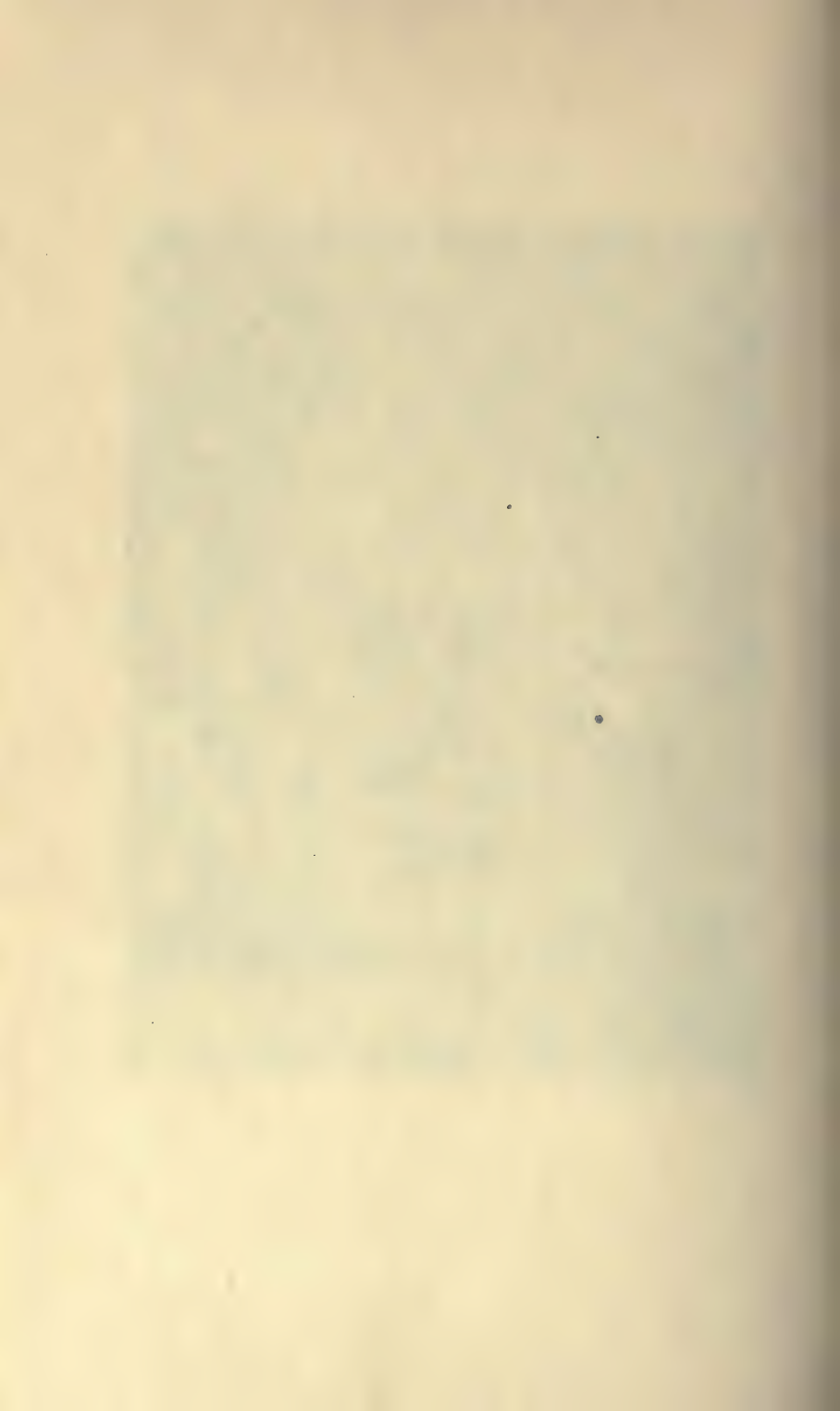
ÉRASTE. *I say the jealous man loves most,  
the other best.*

LES FACHEUX, Act II., Sc. iv.

VOL. IV., Page 347









CLIMÈNE.

And if to win your love a lover must not be jealous, I know the very men to suit you, — men whose love is so long-suffering they would see you in the arms of thirty others without a murmur.

ORANTE, *to Éraste.*

Monsieur, by your decision you must now declare which love to you seems preferable.

*(Orphise enters at the back and sees Éraste between Orante and Climène.)*

ÉRASTE.

Since I am forced to give this judgment, I shall proceed to satisfy you both; and, blaming neither for that which pleases you, I say the jealous man loves most, the other best.

CLIMÈNE.

That decision is very witty, but —

ÉRASTE.

Enough; I have done my part. After what I have now said allow me to leave you.

## SCENE FIFTH

ORPHISE, ÉRASTE

ÉRASTE, *seeing Orphise and going to meet her.*

Ah, madame! how long you have been in coming! I have felt —

ORPHISE.

Oh, no, no! don't leave such charming company for me. You are wrong to say that I am late in coming. (*Motions to Orante and Climène, who are going away.*) You can, I see, do very well without me.

ÉRASTE.

Why be so bitter without a cause, and reproach me for what I myself am made to suffer? Ah! for pity's sake, stay —

ORPHISE.

No; I leave you to follow your companions.

## SCENE SIXTH

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

Heavens! must male and female bores conspire this day to balk my dearest wishes? I'll follow her, in spite of all resistance, and make my innocence shine as the noonday in her sight.

SCENE SEVENTH<sup>1</sup>

DORANTE, ÉRASTE

DORANTE.

Ah! marquis; what annoying bores interrupt our pleasures at every turn! Here am I, enraged about a splendid hunt which a fool — but I must tell you the thing as it happened.

ÉRASTE.

I am searching for a friend, and cannot stop.

DORANTE, *taking Éraсте by the arm.*

*Parbleu!* then I'll tell you as we walk along. A select company of us agreed yesterday to hunt the stag. We slept in the country; I mean, my dear fellow, actually in the open air, under the trees. As hunting is my supreme delight, I went to the wood myself. There, we concluded to concentrate our efforts on a stag of ten, — as some said, though for my part, from what I could make out, I think he was only in

<sup>1</sup> As Louis XIV. left the hall after the first representation of "Les Fâcheux" he said to Molière, pointing to a certain Monsieur de Soyecourt, "There's a character you have not yet copied." On which hint Molière wrote the following scene, which was acted six days later at Fontainebleau. — MÉNAGE.

his second pair. We had, as in duty bound, posted the hounds, and were breakfasting in haste on fresh-laid eggs, when a dolt of a countryman with a long rapier, riding a brood-mare (he called her his good mare) came up to us and with awkward compliments presented, as an additional annoyance, a great booby of a son, as stupid as his father, saying he was a famous huntsman and begged for the pleasure of a chase with us. God preserve all sensible men, when hunting, from fools with horns who toot at the wrong moment, fellows who claim to be marvellous sportsmen, and are followed by a dozen mangy curs which they call "my pack." Well, his request granted and his merits weighed, we proceeded to make the stag break cover. Presently, not three leashes off, tallyho! the dogs were on the scent. I blew my horn loudly; the stag broke cover and went away across the open, my hounds after him, and so well together you might have covered them all with a single doublet. He made for the forest. Then we let the old pack on him and I sprang hastily on my chestnut — You've seen the horse?

ÉRASTE.

No, I think not.

## DORANTE.

Not seen him! Well, he's as good as he is handsome. I bought him lately of Gaveau; and you can very well believe that a man who thinks so highly of me as Gaveau does, wouldn't deceive me in the matter. In fact, I am well satisfied; he never sold a better-bred nor a better-shaped horse, — a barb's head with a clear star, neck and breast of a swan, slim and elegant, no more shoulder than a hare, short-jointed, and feet, *morbleu!* such feet! Shows his spirit by the way he carries himself; and, to tell the truth, I am the only person who is able to manage him. Gaveau's Petit-Jean never mounted him except with fear and trembling. And then his rump, broader than any I ever saw! and God knows what his hind legs are! If you'll believe me, I have refused a hundred pistoles for him to take the place of a horse sold to the king. Well, so I mounted him, and my joy was at its height when I saw the hounds heading the stag off on the open plain. I pressed my horse and was soon at the tail of the hounds alone with Drécar.<sup>1</sup> For an hour or more the stag which had taken to cover made us beat

<sup>1</sup> A noted huntsman.

him up. I encouraged the hounds and made a devil of an uproar. At last, and never hunter was so happy, I forced him out again, and all was going for the best, when our stag saw a younger one and made for him, and half our hounds broke from the rest. I saw them, marquis, with what horror you can well imagine, chase both, and Finaut hesitating! However, he suddenly stopped short, at which my soul rejoiced, and recovered the scent, whereupon I sounded the horn and called out: "Finaut, Finaut! — after Finaut!" Then I caught sight of the game from a molehill; several of the dogs came back to me, and all would have gone well once more, but, for my sins, the young stag darted past that lout of a countryman, who sounded his horn and shouted "Tallyho! tallyho! tallyho!" Every hound left me and followed the blockhead. I galloped after them and came up with him on the road. Alas! I had no sooner cast my eyes on the earth than a black gloom seized me. In vain I tried to show the fool the difference in the trail of our stag and its fellows. He insisted, as all ignorant huntsmen do, that it was *our* game, and by waiting there to argue he let the dogs get forward. I was furious, and swearing at



the fellow with all my heart I urged my horse by whip and spur through the underbrush, calling back the dogs to the first cover. There, to my great joy, they took the scent again, and followed it as if they saw the stag. Again he broke into the open; but — do you anticipate the shock that awaited me? To tell you the truth, dear marquis, it has completely overcome me! The stag passed near that booby, and he, thinking to perform a hunting exploit, pulled out a huge horse-pistol and shot the game through the head! Then he called out to me "I've brought him down!" Good God! who ever heard of pistols being used to hunt the stag? As for me, I thought the act so shockingly out of all propriety that I stuck spurs into my horse and galloped home without deigning to say one word to the ignorant fool.

ÉRASTE.

You couldn't do better; you showed your prudence. 'Tis the only way to rid ourselves of bores. Adieu.

DORANTE.

If you like, we'll find some other region where we can hunt without these country louts.

[*Exit.*]

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

Good heavens! I feel I'm losing patience.  
Let me think of some excuse to make to Orphise.

BALLET.

*The players at bowls stop him to decide a dispute about the game. He frees himself with difficulty, and leaves them dancing steps in which the postures of the game appear.*

*Then boys with slings come about him, but are driven off by cobblers and their wives and fathers and others; who in their turn are driven away by the gardener, who dances a pas seul until the third act is ready.*

END OF SECOND ACT.

## Act Third

## SCENE FIRST

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE

ÉRASTE.

IN one way, it is true, my wishes have succeeded; that adorable loved-one is mollified. But, on the other hand, all seems against me; the cruel stars oppose my love with redoubled vigor. Yes, Damis, her guardian, the greatest nuisance among all my bores, has shown a fresh antagonism to my suit. He forbids his lovely niece to see me, and wishes her to take another husband. Orphise, however, in spite of his prohibition, deigns to grant some comfort to my soul. I have induced her to consent to receive me, in secret, at her house. Love delights in secret favors; what sweetness lies in forcing obstacles! the shortest interview with her we love becomes, if it is forbidden, a surpassing privilege. I am now going to the rendezvous; the hour is early; but I prefer to be too soon for fear of being late.

LA MONTAGNE.

Am I to follow you?

ÉRASTE.

No; lest to some suspicious eyes your presence may betray me.

LA MONTAGNE.

But —

ÉRASTE.

No, I don't choose it.

LA MONTAGNE.

I ought to follow your commands; and yet, perhaps, at a distance, I could —

ÉRASTE.

Silence, I say. Will you never give up this habit of making yourself the most importunate of valets?



SCENE SECOND

CARITIDÈS, ÉRASTE

CARITIDÈS.

Monsieur, this hour is unpropitious for the honor of seeing you; the morning is the proper time to pay my duty; but it is not easy to meet

you then; you sleep too late, or you have not come in, — at any rate, your servants tell me so. Therefore, to make sure of seeing you, I take the present time. I see that fate grants me good-luck; two minutes later, and I should again have missed you.

ÉRASTE.

Monsieur, do you want anything of me?

CARITIDÈS.

I acquit myself, monsieur, of the duty that I owe you, and I come — excuse the audacity that prompts me, if —

ÉRASTE.

Without this ceremony, what have you to say to me?

CARITIDÈS.

As the rank, intelligence, and generosity which all men laud in you —

ÉRASTE.

Yes, yes, I am much lauded. Go on, monsieur.

CARITIDÈS.

Monsieur, it is a very painful thing to introduce one's self to any one. We ought to be pre-

sented to men of rank by those who could say good words for us; words which would have some weight in setting forth our trifling merits. For myself, I could have wished that persons of learning and repute had told you, monsieur, who I am.

ÉRASTE.

I see enough myself to tell me what you are. Your manner of accosting me has shown it.

CARITIDÈS.

Yes, I am a learned man, enchanted with your virtues; not, I wish to say, one of those learned men whose names all terminate in *us* — there's nothing so common as a Latin name. Those that are draped in Greek have better style, and therefore I have chosen one which ends in *ès*, and call myself Monsieur Caritidès.

ÉRASTE.

Monsieur Caritidès, so be it. What have you to say to me?

CARITIDÈS.

Monsieur, I have brought with me a petition which I wish to read to you; and, as your place at court gives you facility, I venture to conjure you to present it to the king.



ÉRASTE.

You can present it to him yourself, monsieur.

CARITIDÈS.

'Tis true the king allows that gracious favor ; but, through the excessive use of this rare goodness, so many bad petitions are presented, monsieur, that they choke the good ones. The hope that brings me here is that you will offer mine when the king may be alone.

ÉRASTE.

Well, you can do the same, and choose your time.

CARITIDÈS.

Ah! monsieur, but those ushers at the court are terrible; they jeer a learned man like the meanest rascal. I never get beyond the guard-room. The horrid treatment they bestow upon me would make me wish to quit the court forever, if I had not conceived the flattering hope that you would graciously be my Mæcenus with the king. Yes, your credit is a certain means by which —

ÉRASTE.

Well, give the thing to me; I will present it.

CARITIDÈS.

Here it is, But first, you must listen to it.

ÉRASTE.

No, no!

CARITIDÈS.

But, monsieur, you must be informed of what is in it. (*Reads.*) "Petition to the king. Sire: your very humble, very obedient, very faithful, and very learned subject and servant, Caritidès, French by nationality, Greek by profession, having considered the great and flagrant errors which are committed in the inscriptions on the signs of houses, shops, inn, bowling-greens, and other places in your good city of Paris, wherein certain ignoramuses, composing said inscriptions, subvert, by a barbarous, pernicious, and detestable orthography, all sense and reason, without regard to etymology, analogy, allegory, or any potentiality whatsoever, to the great scandal of the republic of letters and of the French nation, which is debased and dishonored by the said errors and vulgar blunders in the eyes of foreigners, and notably Germans, insatiate readers and inspectors of said inscriptions — "

ÉRASTE.

The petition is very long, and might bore —

## CARITIDÈS.

Ah! monsieur, not one word of it can be omitted. (*Reads.*) "I therefore humbly supplicate your Majesty to create, for the good of the State and the glory of this Empire the office of controller, intendant, censor, reviser, and corrector-general of the said inscriptions; and to honor therewith this suppliant, — as much in consideration of his rare and eminent knowledge, as for the great and signal service he has rendered to the State and to your Majesty in making the anagram of your said Majesty's august name in French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldaic, Arabic — "

## ÉRASTE.

Very good, very good! Give it to me, quick! It shall go to the king; that's settled.

## CARITIDÈS.

Ah! monsieur; it suffices to present my petition. If the king once sees it I am certain of success; for his justice being great in all things, he will never refuse my just demands. For the rest, as I desire to raise your fame to Heaven, please to give me in writing your name and surname that I may write a poem to your honor in

the form of an acrostic, with the proper two lines and a hemistich.

ÉRASTE.

Yes, yes; you shall have them to-morrow, Monsieur Caritidès. Adieu. (*Alone*) Good God! these learned creatures are born asses; at any other time I might have laughed at such absurdity.



SCENE THIRD

ORMIN, ÉRASTE

ORMIN.

Though a most important matter brings me here, I have waited till that man retired in order to speak to you.

ÉRASTE.

What is it? Pray make haste, for I must go.

ORMIN.

I suspect his visit has greatly irked you, monsieur. He's an old bore, not sound in mind, for whom I keep some riddance always ready. Wherever he may be, at the Arsenal, the Luxembourg, the Tuileries, he wearies everybody with his moonings. Men like you should care-

fully avoid the company of all such empty pedants, who are good for nothing. As for me, I have no fear that I shall be obtrusive, for I have come, monsieur, to make your fortune.

ÉRASTE, *aside*.

Some puffer of worthless schemes, no doubt; for which he 'll promise endless wealth. (*Aloud*) Have you found the blessèd stone which will enrich the world and all the kings thereof?

ORMIN.

Ha! what a jest is that! No, God forbid that I should be among those fools! I do not feed on such vain visions. I bring you weighty information which I desire to convey, through you, to the king. I have it here, hidden upon my person. 'Tis none of those mad projects, vain delusions, with which the treasurer's ears are dinned; nor is it a mere beggarly scheme whose claims look to a paltry matter of a score of millions. No, this of mine will yearly give the king, at the lowest reckoning, four hundred per cent well told, — easily too; no risk and no suspicion, and also no plundering of the people under any guise. In short, 'tis a proposal of unheard-of gain, which will at once be seen to

be most feasible. And if through you I am enabled —

ÉRASTE.

We 'll talk of it later. Now, I am rather hurried?

ORMIN.

If you will promise to keep it strictly secret I will impart to you this most important information.

ÉRASTE.

No, no! I do not want to hear your secret.

ORMIN.

Monsieur, I am certain you are too discreet a man ever to betray it, and I wish to tell it to you, frankly. But first, let me look if any one is near enough to overhear us. (*After looking about him, comes close to Éraste, and whispers in his ear.*) This marvellous plan, of which I am the inventor, is —

ÉRASTE.

A little farther off, and for good reason, monsieur.

ORMIN.

You know, without my telling you, the enormous profits which the king derives, annually,



from his seaports. Now my plan — and no one heretofore has thought of it — is to place seaports all along our coasts. This could easily be done, though the first outlay might be large; but if —

ÉRASTE.

The scheme is good and will delight the king. Adieu. We'll meet again.

ORMIN.

At least you will remember me for having spoken of the matter first to you?

ÉRASTE.

Yes, yes.

ORMIN.

If you would lend me two pistoles, and pay yourself from the first profits, monsieur —

ÉRASTE, *giving money.*

Oh, willingly! (*Alone*) Would to God I could get rid of all these bores as easily! What evil fate has sent them here just now? At last, however, I am free to go — What! is this another coming up to hinder me?

## SCENE FOURTH

FILINTE, ÉRASTE

FILINTE.

Marquis, I have just heard a singular piece of news.

ÉRASTE.

What is it?

FILINTE.

That a man has picked a quarrel with you.

ÉRASTE.

With me?

FILINTE.

Now, why dissimulate? I know, on good authority, that he has called you out; and, as your friend, I have come to offer you my services.

ÉRASTE.

I'm much obliged to you; but pray believe—

FILINTE.

Ah! you won't admit it? and yet, you are out without your valets. However, whether you stay in town or go into the country, you shall go nowhere now without me.

ÉRASTE, *aside*

Ha ! this maddens me !

FILINTE.

Now why do you conceal the thing from me ?

ÉRASTE.

I swear to you, vicomte, that some one has befooled you.

FILINTE.

In vain do you deny it.

ÉRASTE.

May Heaven blast me if —

FILINTE.

Do you really think I shall believe you ?

ÉRASTE.

Good heavens ! I 'm telling you the truth without deception.

FILINTE.

Don't think me such a dupe and nincompoop as that.

ÉRASTE.

Will you do me a favor ?

FILINTE.

No.

ÉRASTE.

Leave me, I beg of you.

FILINTE.

Marquis, that won't do.

ÉRASTE.

I have an affair of gallantry this evening, in a certain place.

FILINTE.

I shall not leave you; wherever that place may be I'll follow your steps.

ÉRASTE.

*Parbleu!* since you insist upon my having a quarrel, I'll have one, and with you, who drive me mad, and whom no civil methods can shake off.

FILINTE.

You take the offers of a friend unkindly; but since you think I do you such ill-service, adieu. Get yourself out of the danger you are in without my help.

ÉRASTE.

You'll be my friend when you have left me. (*Alone*) Now see what evils fate has brought upon me! These torments have made me late; the hour she named is past.

## SCENE FIFTH

DAMIS, L'ÉPINE, ÉRASTE, LA RIVIÈRE, *and his companions*

DAMIS, *aside.*

What! does this traitor expect to win her in spite of me? Ha! my just anger will find a way to thwart him.

ÉRASTE, *aside.*

Surely, I see some one at Orphise's door? Always some obstacle to the sweet interviews she grants me!

DAMIS, *to L'Épine.*

Yes; I have discovered that my niece, in spite of all precautions, intends to receive Éraсте this evening without witnesses.

LA RIVIÈRE, *to his companions.*

What do I hear that man say of our master? Let us go nearer, softly, without making ourselves observed.

DAMIS, *to L'Épine.*

Before he has a chance to accomplish his design we must attack and stab his traitorous heart. Go, call the men; put them in ambush

here; let them be ready to avenge my honor which Éraсте dares to outrage; we'll stop the interview to which he comes,—drowning his criminal passion in his blood.

LA RIVIÈRE, *attacking Damis with his companions.*

Before he is immolated to your fury, traitor, a word with you!

ÉRASTE, *aside.*

Although he meant to injure me, a point of honor bids me defend the uncle of my love. *(To Damis)* I'm to your rescue, monsieur. *(Takes sword in hand and puts La Rivière and his companions to flight.)*

DAMIS.

Heavens! whose arm is this that saves me from certain death? To whom do I owe so great a service?

ÉRASTE, *returning.*

In serving you, I have done no more than I was bound to do.

DAMIS.

Do my ears deceive me? Is that the voice of Éraсте?



ÉRASTE.

Yes, it is I,—too happy if my hand has rescued you; too wretched to have won your enmity.

DAMIS.

What! he whose death I had resolved upon, is he the one to rescue me from death? Ah! 'tis too much; my heart must yield. Although this secret interview opposed my will, your generous action stifles my animosity. I blame my wilfulness and I regret my fault; too long my enmity has done you wrong, and to undo it, once for all and signally, I will this evening unite you to the object of your love.

---

SCENE SIXTH

ORPHISE, DAMIS, ÉRASTE

ORPHISE, *coming out of her house with a torch in her hand.*

What means this terrible commotion?

DAMIS.

Niece, it means nothing but what is pleasant; because, in spite of all my opposition, it gives you Éraсте as your husband. His arm repulsed

the men who would have killed me, and in return your hand shall pay my debt.

ORPHISE.

If 't is indeed to pay him such a debt, I will consent; for I owe all things to the life he saved.

ÉRASTE.

My heart is so astonished at this marvellous change, that in my rapture I doubt lest I be dreaming.

DAMIS.

Come, let us celebrate the happy fate you 'll now enjoy. Send for the violins to make us music.

*(Raps are heard on the door.)*

ÉRASTE.

Who raps so loud?



SCENE SEVENTH

DAMIS, ORPHISE, ÉRASTE, L'ÉPINE

L'ÉPINE.

Monsieur, here come some masqueraders, with fiddles and drums.

ÉRASTE.

Good heavens! more bores! Holà, porters, here! drive out those villains.

## BALLET.

*Porters with halberds pursue the bores and force them to retire ; leaving four shepherds and one milkmaid to dance at their ease ; which, in the opinion of all who saw them, closed the entertainment with a pretty good grace.*

END OF LES FÂCHEUX.

















Moliere, Jean Baptiste

The plays of Molie're

PQ  
1825

.E5  
W67  
v.4.

